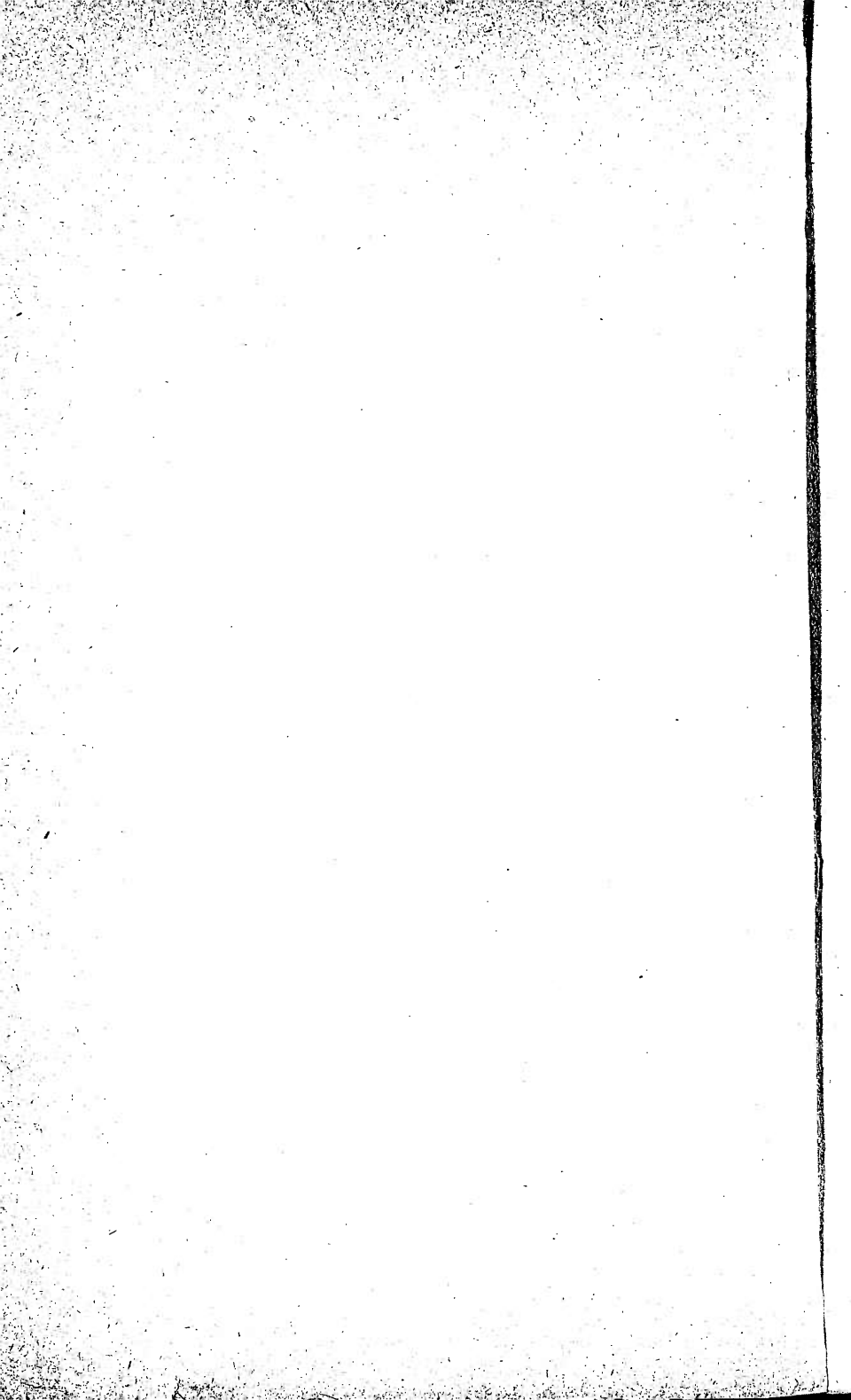


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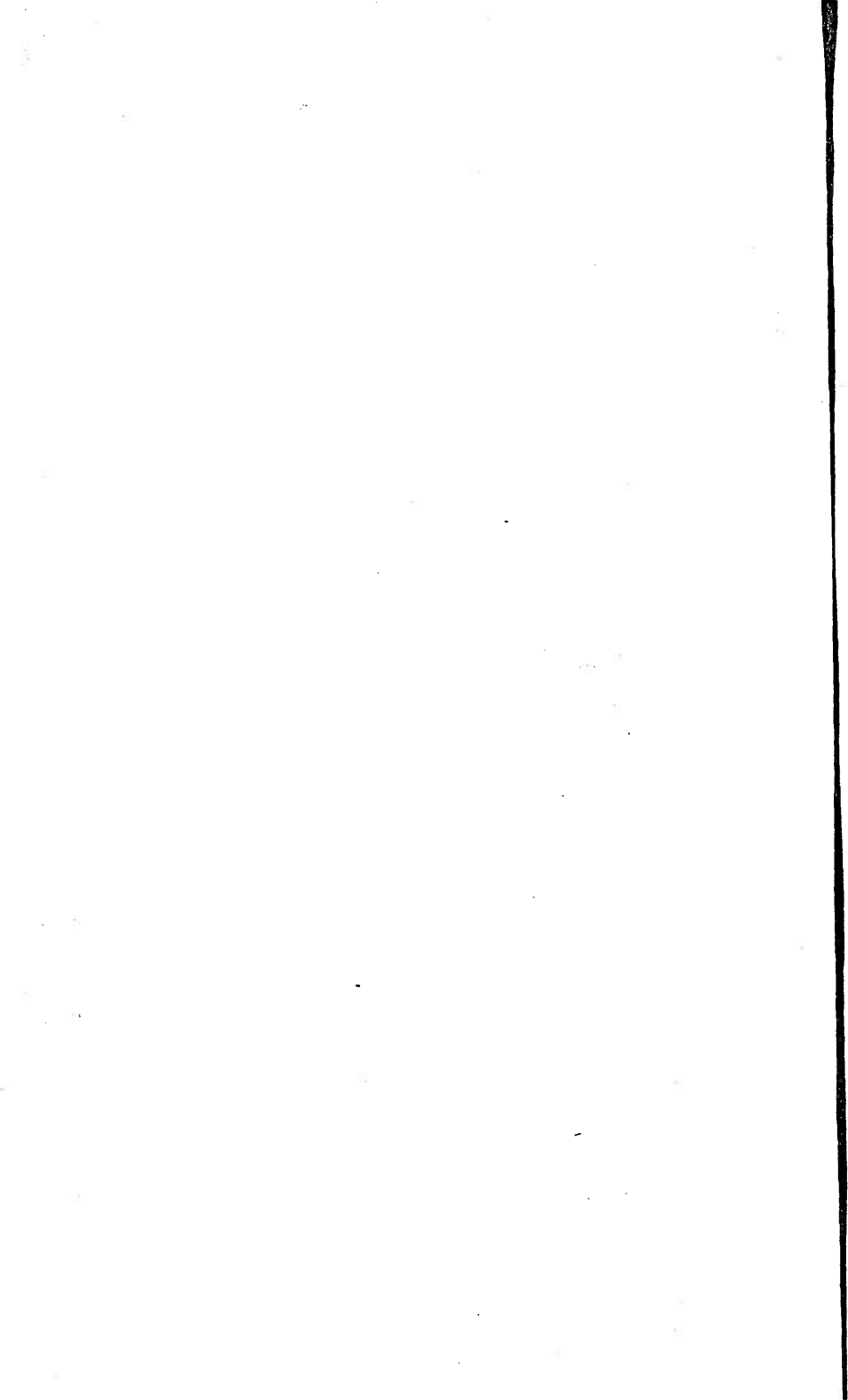
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**BIBLE TEACHING BY
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BIBLE TEACHING BY MODERN METHODS

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EDITED BY THE
REV. FRANK JOHNSON

EDITOR OF
"THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRONICLE AND CHRISTIAN OUTLOOK"



LONDON
ANDREW MELROSE
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INTRODUCTION

THE twentieth century has begun for Great Britain with stirring appeals from many quarters for self-criticism and readjustment. In every direction old institutions and methods are being called upon to justify their existence. Christianity itself is required to restate its message with regard to modern needs and in the terminology which new light and knowledge involve.

It would have been strange in such circumstances if the Sunday School had escaped the time-spirit. So far from doing so it has for some years experienced an agitation for Reform which has steadily grown in area and intensity. There is in the fact no cause for regret. The agitation is a proof of the new place which the Sunday School occupies in the modern world. Time was when the institution was socially and intellectually disconsidered, and laboured under disqualifications that prevented it from taking its place as a serious factor in religious education. That time is rapidly becoming only a memory. Of late years not only has the social and intellectual status of the Sunday School been raised and its teaching improved,

but the gulf between it and the Church has been bridged. Ministers are now working with teachers in closest and most harmonious co-operation, and where once their presence was apt to be resented, it is now cordially invited and welcomed. These conditions make possible reform on wise lines, and justify an optimistic forecast of the future.

That reform was needed no intelligent teacher will deny. Many have parted from the Sunday School as a non-progressive institution in a world of progress. Others have outgrown the Sunday School while it remained stationary. And they were compelled to do it; for, as Holmes says in a striking passage, "Grow we must, though we outgrow all we love." Yet, using another figure, he reminds those who have left the old companion a seeming wreck while they flew by under a pyramid of canvas that there are other forces than the noisy winds. "Lo! at dawn she is still in sight,—it may be in advance of us. Some deep ocean-current has been moving her on, strong, but silent,—yes, stronger than these noisy winds that puff our sails until they are swollen as the cheeks of jubilant cherubim."

One of the deep ocean-currents that act upon the Sunday School was the Conference of Experts and Biblical Scholars held in London on October 31 and November 1, 1906, under the ægis of the Sunday School Union. The Conference was of critical importance, and incident-

ally made history. It was epoch-marking both by the intrinsic value of the papers read and the discussions which followed, and by the circumstances in which it met. The former statement may be verified by a perusal of this volume: the latter may be confirmed by a brief survey of the position of the International Lessons; the application of scientific methods to the teaching of the Scriptures; and the conditions of modern religious education.

For over a generation the International or Uniform Lesson System has been in operation, and alike in the United States, Great Britain, and Canada has won general acceptance. It has met the needs of average schools with remarkable success; and united them in a way that permits of their organisation for teacher-training, daily Bible reading, and aggressive missionary effort. But, more important still, it has made possible the production of lesson helps—in periodical and book form—through which the flame of spiritual insight and the colder, but necessary, light of Biblical scholarship have passed into every Sunday School class. Where once was a chaos of individual effort, largely unintelligent, there is now, at any rate in the progressive schools, a system of ordered study and endeavour, designed to bring the young early to a knowledge of the ways of God with men, and the place of Christ in the redemption of the world.

Such results are full of encouragement, but they do not warrant any complacent sense of finality. Below the average school is a host not yet raised to the efficiency which might be theirs through adopting the International Lessons with their related helps; above the average are many sufficiently advanced and equipped to demand something more systematic, and putting greater emphasis upon knowledge of Christian truth and the history of the Revelation. These have benefited by the advances made in educational science and by the gradual spread of the teachings of Pestalozzi, Herbart, and Froebel; by the studies in adolescence of the kind carried on by President Stanley Hall; and by the work of psychologists like Professor William James. They are convinced that children of different ages need not only different methods, but different presentations of Scripture. Thirty years ago an International Convention adopted as the foundation of its lesson system the following principles: 1. One lesson for all grades. 2. The Old Testament and the New Testament to be covered in equal portions. 3. The course to be completed in six years. 4. A Temperance Lesson to be assigned once a quarter. It is doubtful whether any of the first three principles would be accepted to-day by schools of the higher type. Hence has arisen an agitation in the United States which has led to the formation of the Religious Education

Association, and many efforts to construct Lesson Courses of a more scientific order.

An agitation of a similar, though of a less acute kind, has been proceeding in this country for the last ten years. Of late it has become more active and widespread, and it is evident to careful observers that in order to conserve the good accomplished, and to maintain the position of the International system, certain changes in the Scheme are inevitable. These have already been foreshadowed by the action of the American Section of the Lesson Committee in sanctioning optional courses for Beginners and Seniors, and by the acceptance by the British Section of the Committee of the principle of gradation. These concessions, feared by some as threatening the very existence of the Uniform Lesson Scheme, are regarded by others as the only means of strengthening the hold of the system upon the schools and of increasing its effectiveness.

The application of scientific methods to the study of the Holy Scriptures, first begun by the French priest Simon in 1680, has given birth to modern Biblical Criticism and produced results to which the Church can no longer be indifferent. Do these results concern the Sunday School? The answer is less easy than at first sight appears. It is true that the School must be mainly concerned with the essential truths of Christianity and that the majority of its scholars are in the stage

when intellectual doubt is rarely met with. But a percentage of the scholars are Seniors who touch the world of thought through conversation with their fellows, and through books. These will have to meet the attacks of unbelievers who are quick to use the results of Biblical Criticism to destroy faith in the Scriptures and in Christianity itself. Must our youth be sent forth ignorant of what Christian scholarship has accomplished? And if it be resolved to keep the classes in our schools ignorant of critical results, ought teachers to be left in ignorance? Here is a situation that Sunday School leaders must face. It has become necessary to define clearly what is to be the attitude of teachers to the critical movement, and to give every possible help to the Church in its encounter with the unbelief and doubt that these conditions foster among young men and women.

Further, the call for a review of existing methods has been rendered more urgent through the controversy initiated by the Education Act of 1902. Out of the Sectarian wrangle has emerged the whole question of the religious instruction of the young. What are the principles which underlie religious training? What part should the Home, the School, the Church, the State play in Education? Should State Education be Denominational, Undenominational, or Secular? These questions have been, and are being, hotly debated in England

and Wales, and the issue is not yet decided. Against the secular solution we think the best instincts of the majority of Christian people in this country are ranged. They see with anxiety the spread of wealth, the deepening love of pleasure, the spread of materialism, the decay of family worship and of the reading of the Bible, the alienation of the masses from all the Churches, and they realise that the nation in these days has reached a religious crisis.

The very possibility of the exclusion of the Bible from elementary education, caused by the demands of Roman Catholics and Anglo-Catholics for direct control and a denominational atmosphere in the day school, has brought the Sunday School into greater prominence. If the secular view of education prevail, it is obvious that upon the Sunday School will fall the chief burden and responsibility of giving religious instruction to the young. If such a demand were made upon it, is the Sunday School ready to meet it? Has it the teaching intelligence and force necessary? Is its Bible study sufficiently real and thorough to give the religious training required?

Even though the secularisation of elementary education be only an evil omen that will never be fulfilled, nothing but good would accrue from the bracing up of all Sunday School effort to a higher efficiency. We can never rest content with anything short of the best possible; for

institutions that retain their soul must, like every living organism, follow the law of the life within them, and grow to the utmost limits of strength and fruitfulness. Nor is it pressing the analogy too far to say that if such growth is not visible it must be that the plant is suffering from causes which skilful gardeners may remove.

The situation thus rapidly sketched did not escape the notice of the Sunday School Union. For more than a century the Society has been a leader in the religious education of the young, piloting the studies of teachers through its numberless publications, laying down courses of lessons for the schools of the country, and disseminating knowledge of the best teaching methods and apparatus. Its policy has always been deeds, not words, and while others have often been crying aloud for reform, it has been silently at work cutting the path along which reform must travel.

In conformity with its best traditions, the Sunday School Union in 1906 resolved to call a representative Conference to discuss the International Lessons in the frankest manner, and in the full light of modern needs. The Conference was to include the principal denominations, well-known Biblical scholars, and expert Sunday School workers. It was to meet in circumstances that permitted of undisturbed and adequate debate; it was to be private, that all might speak un-

reservedly with the candour that open meetings restrain and chiefly because its work was to advise the leaders of the Sunday School. Above all, the subject was to be treated in the broadest way, being developed from root principles and under the control of the highest conceptions of Sunday School life and work. First, "The Primary Aims of the School" were to be determined; and the bearing of Modern Biblical Criticism upon Sunday School Teaching reviewed; next, The Mode of Teaching the Bible, and The Essential Equipment of the Teacher were to be discussed; then were to come The International Lessons, with their defects and suggested remedies; and finally, the relation of the Sunday School to the Theological Colleges and to Ministers.

The Conference proved to be as happy in operation as in conception; and it is no exaggeration to say that the gathering was unique in the history of British Sunday Schools. Certainly no more remarkable or representative body of men has ever come together for a two-days' discussion of the problems of religious education. Anglicans and Free Churchmen, ministers and laymen, university and college professors, Sunday School superintendents, child study experts and practical teachers, the member of Parliament and the peer of the realm, representatives from the chief denominational committees for the welfare of youth—all were there, and all attended and took part

in the four prolonged sessions with unflagging interest.¹

The total results constitute nothing less than the reconstruction of the teachers' work upon a new foundation. The vague has become definite; and ideas that were more or less in solution have crystallised into expression. Co-ordination of the disjointed has been secured and broad principles affirmed that will regulate and unify Sunday School effort for many years to come.

First with regard to the Primary Aims of the Sunday School, it was unanimously agreed that the emphasis must always be upon the religious aim, the educational element, however expanded, being always subordinate to the evangelical. In the judgment of the Conference, the School is chiefly a "School" in the sense that it exists to bring the young to Christ, and to instruct them in the opportunities and obligations of the Christian life.

The work of Biblical criticism was recognised to be inevitable, and its assured results, while disturbing to men's statements of the truth, were felt to be in no way subversive of the Evangelical truths which the Sunday School exists to teach. It was affirmed to be the teacher's duty to acquaint himself with these results and to have them in his mind when teaching; but since they

¹ A list of the representatives attending the Conference will be found on page 151.

do not in themselves constitute a message nor affect the substance of the Gospel, they do not come within the scope of the teaching functions of the school. A knowledge of the critical processes and results will be found of service in senior classes, and there chiefly to answer the difficulties that thoughtful young people meet as intelligence expands.

As the discussions proceeded the teacher himself and the Church life about him became more and more the central subjects. To train teachers was perceived to be the key to everything else. The competent teacher will do good work with any curriculum or with none, and he is the only teacher who can work adequately a curriculum of a high grade. But who is to train him? The School can do something by setting the seniors to the task of teaching under good supervision. Some day we may have an institution educating superintendents to act as teacher-trainers as well as managers of the school. But, in the majority of cases, the minister must be the trainer of his own teachers. He is the inspirer of the Church; he knows the spiritual state and intellectual capacities of the youth of the Church; he should be the best-fitted to lead them into Christian service and to help them to render it with success. Obviously the minister himself must have the knowledge and skill to do this, and here comes the opportunity of the Theological College. Though

no resolution was passed on this point, it was felt strongly that the colleges ought to give greater prominence to the Sunday School in their curricula, and that steps should be taken to give theological students a knowledge of psychology and the art of teaching, and a practical acquaintance with the best methods of conducting a modern Sunday School.

With regard to the School curriculum, the Conference unanimously approved of the principle of grading the lesson material, and advised that three and possibly four independent courses of lessons might be provided with advantage. High appreciation was expressed of the incalculable service rendered to the Church by the International Lesson system, and a strong desire was expressed to maintain the International fellowship. It was felt that the International Lesson Committee, having already provided optional graded lessons for the Beginners and Seniors, might extend this service without in any way imperilling the future of the "International" Lesson as the universal course for the main School. For the vast majority of Sunday Schools these three grades will suffice. As a matter of fact they are demanded by the separation of the School into three distinct departments, the Primary, the Main School, and the Institute—a process now going on with increasing rapidity in every part of the country. Of course this means a greater demand upon the time of the members.

of the International Committee and the multiplication of optional courses. But if the Lesson Committee will organise itself to meet the new needs both money and men can be found to discharge the work.

The Conference thus closed upon a note of interrogation. It had no legislative functions, but having registered its decisions in a number of resolutions,¹ it has submitted them to the Council of the Sunday School Union and the International Lesson Committee. A Conference of both sections of the latter body is to be held this year in London, when these resolutions will be discussed. Whatever action may be ultimately taken, there can be no disguising of the opportunity offered, nor of the demands made by a new day. Neither the Sunday School Union nor the Lesson Committee can afford to ignore the claims now made upon them. By the experience and labours of the past they have won the right to construct the course of Bible Study for the world's Sunday Schools; and with faith and courage and an open mind they may command the confidence of the new century in the great educational tasks that confront the peoples. To lead the religious education of the world's children is a magnificent ideal worth making many a sacrifice to realise.

FRANK JOHNSON.

¹ These are given on page 183.

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* * It may be well to state here that though
* * the Conference was held under the ægis of the
Sunday School Union, and the papers are now
published under their authority, the Society is not
responsible for all the views expressed.

THE PRIMARY AIMS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

THE chief object of our Conference is to consider what is the best way of teaching the Bible in the Sunday School. It is most fitting that the discussion should begin by determining the primary aim of such schools. For that Book which is a library—that Divine library which is a book—may be read and taught in a hundred different ways; and we must bear in mind exactly what Sunday Schools are, and what, consistently with the necessary conditions of the case, they should be made. Some of the statements advanced in this paper may possibly be regarded as mere truisms, commonplaces unworthy of discussion. Yet I submit that in this, as in other departments of life, axioms change their character when “felt along our pulses,” and whilst to be obliged to listen to commonplaces may be wearisome, to carry some of them into practice might mean a revolution.

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1. It is, then, not the primary aim of the Sunday School to teach the Bible from the point of view of *literature*. That the book ought to have supreme influence in the front rank of literature, the English Bible as an English classic, we may well believe. Huxley advocated its use in the London Board Schools on this principle, and it is as containing important religious history that the book is studied in many schools. But that is not the primary object of the Sunday School.

2. Nor is the main object *intellectual*, the training of the mind in the highest subjects. That is not the business of the Church in the first instance. Religion will improve the intellect of any man who submits himself to its discipline, and children, above all, need this kind of mental training. They will receive it if they are being well educated, and the teaching of Sunday Schools will contribute towards this end. But this is not their chief end. They are schools, but not schools mainly in an intellectual sense or for an intellectual purpose.

3. The primary aim is not to teach *theology*. Happily the Bible is not a book of theology, but of religion; and if theology be the intellectual presentation of the subject matter of religion, it is only one application of the last paragraph to say that the primary aim is not to teach the dogmas of a Church. This does not imply, of course, the neglect of Catechisms or specific denominational teaching. Such teaching should

PRIMARY AIMS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL 3

and will have its due place in Church schools, but in my opinion it should not form their primary aim.

4. Nor is that aim to teach *ethics*. If the Sunday School does not inculcate a Christian standard of moral conduct, it may be put down as a failure; and if it cannot produce better results in practice than moral philosophers, by Aristotle's own confession, have accomplished, it is a pity. But when an attempt was made some years ago to teach ethics apart from religion in primary day schools because of the difference in the religious opinions of their parents, the failure of such a proposal pointed to that better method of moral training which Sunday Schools have it in their power to carry out.

5. The primary aim of the Sunday School is to teach *religion*, to make the children and young people who are brought under its influence *true Christians*. It is not necessary to discuss the meaning of the last phrase. Some Churches may hold that the acceptance of their distinctive doctrinal and ecclesiastical tenets is necessary not only to the *bene esse*, but to the *esse*, the very existence, of true Christianity. Others may be satisfied that a belief in the Fatherhood of God, the imitation of Jesus of Nazareth, and the brotherhood of man suffices to constitute Christianity, though that is not the Christianity of history. Others may hold, as I do, a middle

position and consider that the former communities claim too much and the latter admit too little, that Christianity, as it has been understood for centuries, implies a relation to God in Christ of a deep and fundamental kind, and that upon this the character and force of the Christian religion depend. But religious—*i.e.*, for us Christian—education is the primary aim of the Sunday School. A prominent Cambridge scholar wrote lately:—“By religious education I mean that continual supply of spiritual food by which a man’s will is strengthened to resist evil within and around him, and on which the health of his higher life depends.” Children need such food in a form fitted to their age, and the Sunday School is the one main source of supply furnished by the Church for this end.

Still, this may in practice mean almost anything. It might imply nothing more than goody-goody, well-meant but uninstructional and unimpressive exhortation as the staple of Sunday School teaching. In many instances this is all that has been given—the best instruction obtainable, far better than nothing, often inspired by the influence of sterling Christian character, but not representing, even in aim, what Sunday School teaching ought to be. If religion is to be effective it must influence heart, intellect, will; I would say the will through the intellect and the heart. Teaching directly addressed to heart and will is for the most

part out of place in day-schools ; there the intellect is the primary consideration, the feelings and conduct being only indirectly affected. We are agreed, however, that true religion must be intelligent and that to be rightly taught it must enlist the highest intelligence available. If, as in some Churches in the past, this element be neglected, a Nemesis will assuredly follow. Since the Bible is a book which in incomparable fashion appeals to all parts of our nature, the intellectual element in it must not be omitted, or slighted, at our peril.

6. Now I am particularly asked to answer the question, What is the relation of the educational element to the evangelical aim ? And I answer that it is a means to an end ; that it must always be kept in sight as a necessary means to the highest end, but never suffered itself to become an end. The intellectual element in the training must be encouraged in every way and raised to its highest power and efficiency, but it should always be kept in complete subordination to the primary aim for which Sunday Schools were established and for which the Church of Christ exists. My work this morning, as I understand it, will be done if I can vindicate to the utmost the claims of the educational element whilst insisting with equal strenuousness that it must be strictly subordinated to that end, to which it forms only an important means.

What is implied by this in practice ? We must

remember (1) What Sunday Schools actually are ; (2) the conditions which will always limit their operations even if reform does its utmost and the ideals at which many are aiming should one day be reached. A Sunday School means the gathering of young people of all ages from infants to adolescents, perhaps adults—in Wales grandparents may be found in the same school with their grandchildren. These aggregations of young people are often not graded, as they should be, into infant schools, main schools, and adult classes. Then be it remembered that for some thirty or forty minutes at most a lesson has to be given, perhaps amidst the clamour of other classes, too seldom with the advantage of a private room. The lesson consists presumably of an exposition of a few verses of Scripture, but in any case it must be such as can be appropriately given under these conditions. Not that existing conditions cannot be improved ; they ought to be improved, they must be improved if Sunday Schools are to do for the twentieth century what they have done for the nineteenth ; and we are here to help to improve them. But as practical men we know the limits beyond which it is hopeless for us to expect to pass for some time to come, and our suggestions will be limited accordingly.

It would appear, however, that the measure of intellectual training which is necessary for the teaching of religion cannot be given unless there

is at least an approximate grading of those who are taught. Intellect differentiates. It is impossible to answer the question, How may the educational element in our schools best be made to minister to the primary spiritual end of training the children? till we know who the children are. Are they babies sent to be out of the way of the parents on Sunday afternoons, or are they youths better educated than most Sunday School teachers, or young women who know their Bibles quite as well as many clergymen and ministers? There is only one religion for all ages, but it is the merest truism to say that if it is to be taught there must be an intellectual presentation of it, and if that is to be rightly given it must vary with age and attainments. It is little short of absurd to generalise concerning Sunday Schools as a whole when the word is made to cover such an indefinite variety of meanings. The kind of mental training which would conduce to the great spiritual end in one case would be positively mischievous in another.

7. This obvious principle needs to be emphasised when we consider that the text-book in the schools is the Bible. Every one knows what serious changes in the mode of regarding and studying the Bible have come to pass in the last thirty or forty years. These should neither be over-rated nor underrated. They are in any case very significant and to many of us very full of hope.

I may for a moment illustrate by taking the three standard Bible dictionaries—Dr. Smith's, of 1863, modified in 1893; Dr. Hastings' in 1898–1903, and the “*Encyclopædia Biblica*” contemporary with it. If it may be assumed, simply for argument's sake, that Hastings' Dictionary represents the opinions of the best educated teachers in England to-day, that implies a momentous change from the views of the same class forty years ago. The question as to how far this does, or should, influence Sunday School teaching is assigned to others, and I will be very careful not to trespass on their province. But it concerns the subject allotted to me in this way. I hold that all the questions raised by Biblical criticism must, so far as Sunday Schools are concerned, be kept in absolute subordination to the primary aim of teaching the Christian religion and making the young people true Christians. The principle applies equally to the most old-fashioned, conservative traditionalist and to the youngest and most eager representative of the new lights, who is quite sure that all wisdom dwells with him. These questions are important in their place, but the children do not come to the school to learn the chronology of the Old Testament, nor whether the Law came before or after the prophets, nor how the Synoptic Gospels are related to one another, nor how the narrative of the Acts may be harmonised with St. Paul's Epistles. Questions

on these and similar subjects may not improbably be asked in some classes, and it is well if the teacher can answer them. When no questions are likely to be asked he will deal with such topics according to the best light he has and the grade of class he is teaching. But all historical and literary information given in Sunday School classes, whether on traditional or critical lines, should be strictly kept in its own place, entirely subordinate to the primary aim of making the children intelligent, earnest, whole-hearted Christians.

8. It is not intended by the frequent insistence upon the end to imply that the means adapted to reach it are unimportant. It is with these, indeed, that this Conference is chiefly concerned. But it appears to me that if agreement be reached as to the primary aim of the schools, and if what may appear a mere commonplace or axiomatic statement be taken as a working and ruling principle, that many details of discussion will settle themselves. For example, these amongst other corollaries would follow its acceptance :—

(a) It is not necessary to teach the whole Bible in the Sunday School. One chief difficulty of the framers of the International Lessons has been that in attempting to cover the whole field, the scheme has extended over so long a period as to fall through by its own weight. None the less

(b) All parts of the Bible may be utilised in

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order to make the teaching of the Christian religion effective and complete. If the Bible is the record of God's manifestation of Himself along a line of revelation which culminates in His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, every portion of Scripture may be used to illustrate and support this main theme. But

(c) Christ and His religion must be supreme, and the primary aim should never be lost sight of in the attempt to make Biblical knowledge more complete, or the intellectual results more scientifically accurate and systematic. The Gospels will form the central feature, both in the sense that they will be read more frequently than other portions, and that in choosing lessons from the Law, the Histories, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the remainder of the New Testament, the teaching of the Christian religion as such, and in its present-day aspects, will be paramount still.

(d) The Bible being, as we know it is, a vast treasure-house, comprising very various contents, all its modes of teaching must be employed, if it is viewed as the text-book of our religion; but especially those that are suited to the child's mind, e.g.,

Biography: Children need stories, stories, and again stories. Especially *the* Story of all others.

History: Which teaches on the larger scale, as biography does from the individual life.

Prophecy: Not expounded in a mechanical fashion which makes every verse point directly to Christ; but as an enthusiastic unfolding of the myriad ways in which the seers of old time prepared the way for the greatest Prophet that ever lived.

Psalms: As God's Word sung, another element in the progressive revelation of God to His people and the progressive knowledge which His people gained of God—here expressed in the glowing, soul-subduing language of poetry.

Wisdom Literature: As illustrating religion on the human side, the inculcation of major and minor morals, all under the dominating influence of a religion which is only complete in Christ.

Chronology, Geography, and kindred studies called secular, may be made to minister to the teaching of religion.

Doctrine as unfolded in the Epistles will not be dry when the children are shown how in all its parts it carries on, and carries out, the message and purpose of Christ the Saviour. Whilst none can say that imagination is forgotten, or has no part in religious teaching, with a text-book before him which contains on the one hand the parables of Jesus, and on the other the book of Job, the visions of Daniel and the mystic splendours of the Apocalypse.

12 BIBLE TEACHING BY MODERN METHODS

I am convinced that a thorough carrying out in practice of the primary aim which we all in theory accept would relieve us of no small proportion of our difficulties, if it did not solve the whole Sunday School problem. The teacher, like the minister when ordained to his sacred and closely kindred work, is bidden to "draw all his cares and studies this way"; and he will find that every God-breathed Scripture is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction in error, for instruction in right-doing, so that each child under training may become, like the man of God, himself complete and in due course completely equipped for every good work.

W. T. DAVISON.

MODERN BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND ITS BEARING UPON SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING

I. THE OLD TESTAMENT

IT is often said, and truly, that the bulk of Old Testament "scholarship" in this and other countries is on the side, not only of "Higher Criticism" (for no sensible person will dream of denying that criticism, both "lower" and "higher," has its legitimate place), but also of the special "results" which are commonly held to flow from the application of that criticism, especially in the Old Testament. These results, in their main features, are held to be "assured," and it is regarded as a mark of plain prejudice, or ignorance, or something worse, to entertain any doubt of them, or oppose their acceptance. But, if they are "assured," it will very naturally be asked, Why should they not be taught? No one now hesitates to admit that the earth goes round the sun, instead

of the sun round the earth, as was so long believed; or that the earth, as geology proves, is vastly older than the six thousand years which the old chronology assigned to it. He would be a very blameworthy person who concealed these facts, or, in a Sunday School, or anywhere else, taught in a way contrary to them. If, therefore, certain things are now "established" with regard to the structure and character of the Old Testament, why should they not also be taught in our Sunday Schools and pulpits? Nay, is it not our plain duty to make them known as early and as widely as we can?

I entirely agree that, if these things are scientifically established, it is our duty to make them known, though it might even then be a question whether the Sunday School is ordinarily the right place for such tuition. The story of Joseph will always be the story of Joseph to our children; the narratives of the call of Samuel, of David and Goliath, of Daniel and the lion's den, will retain their perennial charm for their minds; the teachings of the Psalms, the Proverbs, and the Prophets will always be an inspiration to faith and goodness; and no good would be done, but a great deal would be lost, by complicating the simple, direct impression of these passages by instruction about J and E and P, or other questions of date or authorship. It is a graver question how far the main "results" of this criticism, or what are assumed to be such,

should be taught to our advanced Sunday School classes, or to the young men and women in our Bible-classes, guilds, Christian Endeavour meetings, and the like. I leave out of view the day school and the pulpit, though obviously the same question arises there.

On this point, facts have to be faced. In every case much will depend on the personal conviction, and, above all, on the wisdom and good sense, of the teacher, as to what he will feel it his duty to say on any particular lesson. I assume that such a teacher is, to begin with, a believer in the fact of a Divine revelation to Israel and in Christ, and that he is sincerely loyal to that conviction in his teaching in his class. If he is not, he should not be there. This is not a question of criticism, but of ultimate religious attitude. If a teacher, *e.g.*, uses his position to destroy the faith of his pupils in, say, the Resurrection of Christ; or, with Professor Foster, of Chicago, in a book I have just been reading on "The Finality of the Christian Religion," declares that an intelligent man in these days cannot believe in any miracles, I have no hesitation in saying that the managers of a Sunday School will do well, as speedily and as courteously as possible, to dispense with his services. But suppose such a teacher to be a devout, believing man, yet to be intelligently convinced of the truth of certain views in criticism, say, of the composite nature of the Pentateuch, of the exilic origin of

the latter part of Isaiah, or of the post-Mosaic date of some of the Levitical laws, it will be difficult to maintain that he should absolutely suppress his honestly-held beliefs in speaking on these subjects, any more than it can be expected of a man who does *not* hold these opinions that he should be silent as to his disbelief in them.

This much at least I will say, that I think the time is past for refraining from giving our intelligent scholars—I would add, our Christian people—some fair idea of what these supposed results of criticism are. This can be done without unduly influencing opinion one way or the other, though possibly the expression of personal conviction cannot altogether be avoided. In any case, it ought wisely, and without undue dogmatism, to be done, for the simple reason, if for no other, that these things are there, that people are hearing, reading, and thinking about them, and that more harm is likely to accrue to the young mind from being left in ignorance of them than from hearing them reverently and intelligently explained.

I hope it will be evident that I do not desire to take up any extreme or obscurantist position on this matter, and the members of the conference will bear with me if I now say a few things with which some of them, at least, are not likely to agree. I desire, first, to recognise, with all my heart, that there is criticism and criticism, and that it is possible to place many of the results of criticism

in so mild a light that they may with justice be regarded as perfectly innocuous. There is, if I may be pardoned the expression, a "sugar-coated" mode of presenting the results of the modern criticism which in no way conveys a full idea of what it means or effects in the hands of its leading and more outspoken representatives.

In merely literary questions of date and authorship there must always be wide scope for difference of opinion. It is not of itself of vital moment whether the Pentateuch is a single work, or is composed of three or more documents. If these documents are themselves of good, trustworthy quality, they may even, as in the case of the Four Gospels, strengthen faith by furnishing us with a three-fold or four-fold witness, instead of a single one. The general soundness of the patriarchal tradition may be admitted, though it is held that in certain of its features it receives an idealisation or interpretation from later times. It may be believed that Moses gave laws to Israel, though the final collection or codification of the priestly laws may be thought to be later: in their last form perhaps as late as Ezra.

I should say that I myself regard many of the things assumed as "results" under these heads as extremely doubtful. I do not believe, *e.g.*, that sound grounds exist for a separation such as the critics make between their J and E documents. I do not believe that these, especially the so-called

E, ever existed as separate documents at all; still less am I convinced of the late date or separate existence of the document called P. I am as certain as I am of anything on this earth that it never did so exist. I do not believe that Deuteronomy first saw the light in the reign of Josiah, or is a production of that age, but hold it to be, in accordance with its own witness, substantially as least, a Mosaic book. I have not time to discuss these questions here, nor do I desire to do so, and I ask no one to accept any opinion on my *ipse dixit*. But I mention these as matters on which, like the dates of portions of Isaiah, discussion is fairly open, and only protest against them being regarded as matters on which criticism has said its last word.

But I must now repeat that the case is vastly understated when it is represented that questions like these represent the total scope and spirit of that modern critical movement which, like a great wave, has swept over the field of the Old Testament during the last quarter of a century, and created such well-grounded anxiety in the breasts of earnest lovers of the Bible everywhere. It is hopeless to attempt to minimise the seriousness of this movement. The results of it are only now beginning to be fully apparent when its principles and methods are being carried into the sphere of the New Testament, with effects disastrous to the Gospels, and subversive of the

great facts on which our Christian faith is founded. It is not a matter on the surface at all, or that deals only with innocent questions of age and authorship. It goes down to the foundations of our faith in the Biblical revelation.

I am told I ought to take my opinion of it from the "moderate" men. But I prefer, very naturally, to go, in the first instance, to the "representative" men; to the men who originated the movement, and to whose works the moderate men themselves habitually refer us for full information regarding it. And what I find there convinces me that this scheme of criticism, whether adopted and advocated by believing men or not, is one which the Christian Church can never take to its bosom, in the Sunday School or anywhere else, as compatible with an earnest and believing use of the Bible as God's holy Word. It is a scheme anti-supernaturalistic in its root; inverting the Bible's whole account of Israel's history, laws, and institutions; re-constructing that history on lines of natural evolution; dismissing as legend the patriarchal period (Mr. Addis, in his recent book on "Hebrew Religion," has not room for even so much as a mention of it); "wiping out," to use a phrase of Duhm's, the Mosaic period; treating Joshua as a "romance"; denying, of course, all miracles; robbing Samuel and David of the more exalted traits with which "theocratic" narrators invest them; making the most charac-

teristic institutions of the priestly law post-exilian inventions.

I speak with all respect, even with love, of some of the excellent men and able scholars who feel it their duty to accept these theories; but I decline to shut my eyes, in any irenical interest, to what they really mean, or to the peril they involve. We speak of teaching these things in our Sunday Schools. I dare to say, with full sense of responsibility, that if many of the things which are found in our approved text-books on this subject were openly and undisguisedly preached in our pulpits next Lord's Day throughout the land, there would be nothing less than a revolution in the Churches. The Christian people simply would not stand them.

I am not really in spirit an alarmist, or anything of the sort, and only a strong sense of conviction leads me to write these strong words. If they are thought too strong, the Conference must pardon me. I shall be told, as I have often been, that I have no right to drag in imagined consequences; the only question is, What is the truth? But people must be allowed to guide themselves by a modicum of common-sense. From a Fiscal Controversy downwards, no sane man wilfully closes his eyes to the consequences of his theories and actions. If these are serious, they furnish at least a reason for the most searching examination of the grounds on which he is called to believe

or act. If the theories work out harmfully, he will probably think that a good reason for doubting if they accord with the truth of things. In any case, this is no mere intellectual or academic inquiry. The Christian man wants to be sure he is not parting with anything vital to his religious faith and hope.

Am I altogether alone in believing that great peril attaches to these theories, which have found so much acceptance, or that they need, in the interests of science itself, to be reconsidered and recast from their very foundations? By no means. I could name to you, were this the place, very many scholars—some of them sufficiently eminent—far more, indeed, than many suppose, who entirely share these convictions. And are the theories themselves settled beyond all reasonable dispute? It would be easy to show that they are not.

Take, in closing, only two illustrations—one from the Old Testament, the other from the New. I have on my table before me two papers, both German, bearing on this very subject. One is an address delivered a few months ago at a conference at Eisenach by no less distinguished a personage than the learned Orientalist Hugo Winckler. And what is it? A root and branch attack on the presuppositions of the Wellhausen theory of history and religion, including the post-exilian origin of the Levitical law, which we are

commonly asked to accept among the "assured results." The other is a pamphlet of the Ritschlian professor, Julius Kaftan, of Berlin, in which he deals equally drastically with the modern "historical-critical" theories of Jesus and Paul. These theories are said to be the results of the application of the scientific historical method. "No," Kaftan says, with deep truth, "they have their roots in other soil altogether than that of method. It is, in brief, the so-called 'modern view of the world' that lies behind them"—a view that brings everything within the limits of unbroken causal connection. And he closes his searching examination with the words: "I conclude, therefore, that this 'Jesus religion' is a thing without roots. As it has points of support neither in the Gospel of Jesus, nor in primitive Christianity, so it will never approve itself, not to-day and not in the future, as a possible form of Christianity."

I say amen to these words of the Ritschlian prophet, and would apply them, with little change, to the theories of the "historical-religious" criticism of the Old Testament. I advise, therefore, that the teacher think once, twice, even thrice, before introducing these modern critical theories into his Sunday School.

JAMES ORR.

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT

The postulate with which I start is, that the teacher in a Sunday School is not to give any results of criticism which might discredit the Bible. His object is to make the children realise the uniqueness and the authority of the Book, and any line of teaching which might prejudice the child's mind against it would obviously be out of place. Thus the teacher cannot safely use the "Encyclopædia Biblica," where the extreme and unsustained speculations of critics are given without correction. It would be cruel, for example, to teach a child Schmiedel's view of the Gospel narratives; for a child would naturally infer from it that nothing is known of our Lord's life except a few of the most unimportant of His utterances. Equally cruel would it be to teach a child Van Manen's view of the Pauline letters, for that would give the impression that we have no genuine Epistles of St. Paul, and so would remove the first line of literary defence of the Christian verities.

But when we have agreed that the extremes and extravagances of criticism are not suitable for the

instruction of children, we are still faced with the question : Whether there are not assured results of criticism which may give even to children a truer and richer view of the New Testament ? It is generally admitted that the critical handling of the Old Testament has increased the interest, and even strengthened the authority, of those writings by giving to the Prophets their proper place ; by resolving the moral difficulties of the historical narratives ; and by showing the gradual development of the Mosaic Law. Now, are there results equally ascertained and equally serviceable in the criticism of the New Testament ? I think there are. And though it will not be possible to cover the ground, three of these results may be selected to illustrate the line which efficient teachers ought to take.

First of all, there is the advantage to be gained by a proper chronological arrangement of the New Testament books.

Secondly, there is the solution of some outstanding difficulties secured by the literary analysis of the books.

And, thirdly, there is the light to be shed upon the New Testament, from the study of Biblical theology, that is to say, the recognition that each writer in the New Testament has a certain theological *venue* of his own.

1. *The chronological arrangement of the books.*

The order suggested, for example, by Dr. Moffat

in his "Historical New Testament" sheds an immediate and much-needed light on the whole of the New Testament literature. There may be disputed points in that brilliant work, as, for example, the date of James, or of the Pastoral Epistles, but the general effect of the re-arrangement is to bring out the real lines of defence for the historicity of Christianity.

First of all come the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul. These are followed by the synoptic narratives in the order, Mark, Matthew, and Luke, but the Epistle of the Hebrews follows on Matthew, and indicates the connection between the old order and the new, and the Acts of the Apostles follows immediately on Luke, showing the two treatises together, which should never be divided. Then, leaving out of account the smaller writings of more doubtful date, the New Testament closes with the Johannine literature, Revelation, the Gospel of John, and the three Epistles of John.

Any one who has studied the New Testament in this order, learning to recognise that the earliest historical testimony is that of the contemporary Paul, learning also to see how the Gospel narrative develops in the hands of the early writers into the spiritual and mystical interpretation of John, has obtained a grasp of the New Testament of a kind which cannot be secured so long as the books are arranged in the accidental and uncritical order of

the canon. Certainly any intelligent teacher would be able to understand and appreciate this result of criticism, and in proportion as he understood it he would give new life and interest to the New Testament literature, as he taught it, even to a child.

2. *The solution of difficulties resulting from a correct literary analysis.*

There is no time to do more than give a single instance of the kind of help which literary analysis may bring to the interpretation of the New Testament. In the Apocalyptic discourse of our Lord, especially as it is recorded in Matthew xxiv., there is a difficulty which every reader must have felt, but which has never been removed nor is it capable of being removed, until the principles of literary criticism are applied to the passage. The difficulty is, that to all appearance our Lord declares that His Second Advent and the end of the world would happen within the generation that was living when He spoke. The many harmonistic devices which have been employed to remove this difficulty are unsatisfactory, and some of them are an insult to the intelligence even of a child. But when literary analysis is applied to the passage the difficulty almost disappears. It is comparatively easy to unravel two threads of discourse which by the Evangelist have been heedlessly twisted together.

There was a prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem

and the end of the Jewish economy which our Lord evidently uttered as He left the Temple for the last time. There were also prophecies of His Second Advent and of the final judgment which He uttered then, or at other times. When these two threads are separated, and it is a task which, when once attempted, is found to be comparatively simple, it becomes plain that the saying, "This generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled," belongs to the prophecy of the fall of Jerusalem, while the saying unfortunately blended with it that "even the Lord Himself did not know the day or the hour," belongs to the prophecy of the final judgment. The difficulty so clearly resolved by attention to the literary structure can only be satisfactorily removed from the minds of children by accustoming them to read the Bible with the intelligence awake, and with such allowances as are needed in reading any ancient document.

3. *The Biblical theology of the New Testament.*

Modern as the idea is, every one who has applied it to the Bible has learned the assistance that it brings to a full appreciation of the New Testament writings. Biblical theology has taught us to see that we have first a Pauline theology; secondly, what we may call a Synoptic theology; and thirdly, a Johannine theology; contributing elements to the interpretation of the facts of the Christian revelation.

The Pauline theology is contained in the undisputed Epistles of St. Paul. It reveals itself also in the Pastoral Epistles, the Epistle to the Hebrews, and 1 Peter. In the opinion of some modern writers, the Pauline theology has been the dominant factor in the making of Christianity; but powerful as it is, it is balanced, and we may say modified, by the Synoptic theology, or the ideas of Jesus as they survived in the oral and written traditions of the first generation.

Then the Pauline theology and the Synoptic theology are supplemented and completed by the Johannine theology of Revelation, the Fourth Gospel, and the Epistles of John. A careful student of the New Testament is seldom inclined to pit these theological positions one against another. It is by distinguishing them and then by combining them that a full and rich view is obtained of the contents of the Gospel. This study is not beyond the power of an ordinarily educated teacher, and the results of the study upon an intelligent child are likely to be far reaching.

Now it may be said that even these three lines of critical inquiry would tax unduly the ordinary Sunday School teacher. If that be so, it should be the task of those who teach the teachers, and especially of the Sunday School Union, to put these results, and results such as these, plainly and convincingly before teachers; for it must be

recognised that criticism in these ways is becoming the surest apologist of the historic Gospel; and while the New Testament as dogmatically handled has lost ground, critically handled by those who combine reverence with criticism, it will recover its position and gain in interest and in authority.

R. F. HORTON.

THE METHOD OF TEACHING THE BIBLE

I. THE SCIENTIFIC *v.* THE HAPHAZARD

UNLESS one is much mistaken there is a growing demand on the part of teachers and parents for some guidance in the best way to make the Bible intelligible to their scholars and children. Young people are growing up into a totally different mental atmosphere from that in which our childhood was spent. They will learn the history of the past and the facts of the present in a new way, and that way is, more or less, in every subject the method of orderly science.

To find out the truth about anything, they are to find out first how it came to be what it is. Nothing escapes this mental attitude. It would be, in my humble opinion, a betrayal of the highest interests of the young if the Church in all its branches does not come forward and offer the truest guidance which its own knowledge allows it

to give. There is a line of Milton somewhat to the point :

“Commission from above
We have received, to answer the desire
Of knowledge—within bounds.”

The bounds of knowledge are relative to each age of Christian culture, and we can only offer to the world what our scholarship allows us to offer.

This paper, then, is an attempt to go to the root of the haphazard methods of teaching and presenting the Bible material and to show :

(1) That we have in a revered and honoured past, sound precedent for superseding incoherent methods by a scientific one.

(2) To give in briefest outline a proposed scheme.

(3) To indicate certain advantages which may reasonably be expected to follow its adoption.

(1) The precedent to which I draw attention first is familiar to those who know the history of the English Bible since that period of enlightened reform—the Renaissance and the Reformation.

One quotation from William Tyndale will be sufficient for our purpose. Speaking of the school of divines who then held the field, he said: “They divide Scripture into four senses—the literal, tropological, allegorical, and anagogical—the literal sense has become nothing at all. . . . Twenty doctors expound one text twenty ways, and with an antitheme of half an

inch some of them draw a thread nine days long. . . . They not only say that the literal sense profiteth nothing, but also that it is hurtful and noisome and killeth the soul. And this they prove by a text of Paul (2 Cor. iii.): ‘Lo! say they, the literal sense killeth, the spiritual sense giveth life.’”

Thus Tyndale begins his crusade for the open Bible.

He had on his side great scholars like Colet and Erasmus. Erasmus’ desire is well known: Colet is best remembered in the story of the visit paid him one winter night. A priest came in, an attender at Colet’s lectures, and together they sat down by the fire and talked weather. At last the visitor summoned up courage and drew from his bosom a little book, and explained that in it he had written out the Epistle of St. Paul. Colet at once loved him for loving St. Paul, and said: “Open your book, and we will see how many golden truths we can gather from the first chapter only of the Epistle to the Romans.”

This is just an instance of the policy of these early reformers. Their contention was that the method of presenting the Bible then in vogue made it the least understood of all books. If it could be brought into the light of day men would read it and understand.

So it happened. The era of reading the Bible set in; “England became the country of one

book, and that book the Bible." Every one read it, or had it read to them. The scientific method of the schoolmen was cast into the limbo of forgetfulness, and every man had his own way with the book.

But one observes that the result was not as satisfactory as had been expected. It was discovered, as things settled down after the Puritan revolution, that some kind of guidance was after all necessary, if the Holy Scripture was to remain an authority for faith and morals. A most instructive situation, I apprehend, and inevitable. Certainly the scholarship of the age responded to the call and the Bible came again under a system, which made it intelligible.

It is this system that has remained victorious ever since. In a popular and practical sense it is represented by the Reference Bible. There are Ussher's dates: the world was created B.C. 4004. There are the terse scholarly headings to the chapters and sections. Christ speaks everywhere. Abraham is blessed with a promise of His coming. His Word is in the Psalmist and in Isaiah. Ezekiel is occupied with the cedar of the Gospel, and in the Song of Solomon Christ setteth forth the grace of the Church.

One observes in this that the Bible settles into position for the schoolmaster under a scheme of divinity: a unity is brought into its pages, and a reader may open them haphazard, to find himself

certainly in the presence of Christ. It was an honest attempt to introduce order when the popular mind was going astray : it was as honest an attempt as that of the schoolmen before them, and both aimed at the same goal—to make the Bible intelligible.

Yet for all their honesty, and all their theological acumen, their system has only become the haphazard method of a new age of Christian culture. Once more it has happened that the scientific order of one period breaks down in face of a new world.

Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, was perhaps the first to prove that the Bible could be made intelligible to boys on other principle of interpretation. From his day to this, this kind of teaching set in, and we are familiar with it. It has been a time of Bible reading, just as it was when Erasmus praised Folly and Colet lectured. I often think that Green's well-known description of those days applies even more truly to the nineteenth century:—

“Legends and annals, war-song and psalm, state-rolls and biography, the mighty voices of the prophets, the parables of Evangelists, stories of mission journeys, of perils by sea and among the heathen, philosophic arguments, apocalyptic visions, all were thrown broadcast.”

Surely this is a description of the Bible in a very nineteenth century manner. For two generations we have been taught that the Bible

is a living book. We have read "The Land of the Book," Stanley; "Sinai and Palestine"; Farrar's "Life of Christ," and then Geikie's. Teachers have been assured that they must be obtuse beyond redemption if, with books like these in their hands, they could give a dull lesson.

The question is whether this kind of teaching has not run its course. Has it not illuminated without making any profound change? Certainly the old scheme of prophecies and types has been broken through, but still the old scholarship holds sway.

If we take any syllabus for examination we find that the implied order, both in point of time and of spiritual importance, is that which has been dominant for three hundred years. The children of a Standard 1 are taught an outline of the Book of Genesis, with an exact knowledge of the time of Abraham. After similar feats of scholarship, in the 7th Standard they recapitulate lives of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Saul, David and Daniel. In a Sunday School the afternoons for a year are taken up in lessons from Genesis i. to Judges vii. The Boys' Brigade are ordered to read daily Daniel, then Philippians, then St. Matthew and Leviticus, and pass from Numbers to St. John. Church Sunday School teachers may be examined if they are advanced in the lives of Jacob and Joseph with St. John xi.-xxi., whilst if they care for honours they

may be tested in a general knowledge of the Bible.

I need not quote further instances, but wish to point out that in all this madness there is method, and until you strike a blow at the method the madness will drive more and more people to the madhouse. It is the method of a past age of Christian culture, the age of the Reference Bible and its body of divinity.

To use it is to teach in haphazard fashion. Teach with as vivid an Eastern imagination as you can engender by a visit to Palestine under twelve tribes of lecturers, teach it, with as spiritual an insight as a Maurice, yet your teaching will be vitiated by the theory that the Bible can be taken as it stands, and that, taken so, you are showing the young what really happened, and are telling the truth.

Has not the time come when, in the interest of the authority of the Bible, the appeal made in the seventeenth century should be repeated? May not we ask of the Christian scholarship of our time how best to bring order to the Scriptures, and to our interpretation of them?

For more than a century men of notable piety and uprightness have investigated Biblical problems, it is not unlikely that the authority of the sacred Book will be reinstated by appealing to their labours. At any rate an orderly scheme is now before the Church, and to it I now ask attention.

2. THE SCIENTIFIC ARRANGEMENT OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

(a) *The New Testament.* Since the Bible contains a record of the revelation of God, that which comes last in order of development, is first in order of use for the immediate purpose of teaching. The Revelation culminates in Christ. The first essential is so to arrange the New Testament literature that there can be no mistake as to what is revealed.

Two methods are suggested, and in point of view of scientific arrangement one is as good as the other. The first suggestion is that the old idea of harmonising the Gospels should be abandoned, and as a foundation, the Gospel of St. Mark should be used as authentic for the life of Christ. Then parts of St. Luke and St. Matthew give the teaching, and the Epistles of St. Paul and the Gospel of St. John come in to show the more mature faith.

Or it has been proposed that the New Testament should be arranged as a record of religious experience; the documents being used to illustrate the manifold growth of faith in Christ. Prominence would then be given to the belief, character and mission of the primitive Church, rather than to the historic personality of the Saviour.

But I hardly think that the New Testament is as great a victim to haphazard legerdemain as the

Old, and certainly it is in connection with the older Testament that the call for settlement is strongest.

(b) *The Old Testament.* It is then to be suggested that we boldly and consistently declare that the Old Testament is a record of the rise, growth, and meridian splendour of the religion of Israel. There are in this development distinct stages, separate not merely in time, but in their idea of God and of morality.

The Old Testament is not of the same spiritual value in all its parts, and could not be, to be true.

The stages are (1) Pre-Mosaic religion; (2) Mosaic religion to Amos; (3) Pre-exilic prophecy and history; (4) Post-exilic prophecy and history.

First there are dim traditions of a pre-Mosaic religion. Much of this is conjecture, and can only be constructed from survivals of custom and ritual to the next age, so that it may safely be left on one side.

The second stage is clearly marked. Beginning with Moses, "the great kadi of the wilderness," as he has been called, and reaching forward to the age of Amos, it contains the account of all that travail of soul through which Jehovah became Lord. Great care is needed in interpreting this period. It is an age of primitive ideas, manifold idolatry, and superstitious custom. It records, indeed, many an immortal story of heroes like Jonathan, and a Solomon appears upon the stage

in barbaric splendour. Yet it is not the part best suited to train the young in that knowledge of God which leads to Christianity. He is at most the national helper: the war God: He is always on Israel's side. He is worshipped under the form of graven images. The serpent which Moses made lasts down to the times of Hezekiah. On the side of conduct, strange things are seen. Deborah praises Jael's treachery, and David treats his prisoners of war with horrible cruelty.

No one need deny that there was a strain of higher piety and a nobler ideal of justice struggling to find expression, but it had not reached to a commanding position, nor the clearness of a revelation of the true God.

It is when we pass to the next stage that we reach the pivot of a scientific method, the era covered by the writings of the prophets.

It plainly falls into two parts, the pre-exilic and the post-exilic literature and history. Here we have the wonderful unfolding of the name and power of the Alone God, Lord of heaven and earth, God of Gods and King of every country. There is the story of mighty empires, the life-work of spiritual men of heroic mould, the fall and rise of city states, the formation of a Church and its matchless book of praise and prayer, the idea of law humane and just clothed with majesty: the schoolmaster abroad—the wise trainer of youth—and a few specimens reach us

of speculative thought in which human effort and prayer press very near the secrets still kept by the Most High.

The more one studies this part of Scripture the more is one convinced that through them came almost everything that is of permanent value in the Old Testament for theology, or life. It is not that there are no limitations—one would be a Jew to say so—but that they lie in direct approach to the full light of the Saviour.

As a primary source of theological science, the prophets and their disciples stand unchallenged. Dr. W. Newton Clarke, in speaking of the use of the Scriptures in theology, gives a high place to them :—

“ We read in the Old Testament the history of religion. We find realistic pictures of ethical and religious life all along the way, and see how men thought of God from stage to stage of their advancing life. We find in the older books the thought of God growing finer and truer up towards Christ, until at length a prophet, adding to the thought of physical transcendence the vision of moral beauty, can say : ‘ Thus saith the High and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, Whose name is Holy. I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to secure the spirit of the humble, and to restore the heart of the contrite one. For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, for the

spirit would fail before Me, and the souls which I have made.' ”

Dr. A. B. Davidson writes : “The loftiest thoughts of God expressed in Scripture are found in Job and Deutero-Isaiah.” Dr. Kautzsch, in his exhaustive survey of the Religion of Israel, relies on the period for his greatest results.

When we turn to writers on the ethics of the Bible the testimony is similar. The genesis of the social conscience which the American, Professor Nash, has so splendidly elucidated, is in the prophetic consciousness. That, he implies, which is best in the newest of Western races is rooted in and still may be nourished by contact with the prophetic passion for civic righteousness as part of the very service of God.

One is reminded of Lord Acton's great saying : “A speech of Antigone, a single sentence of Socrates, a few lines that were inscribed on an Indian rock before the Second Punic War, the footsteps of a silent yet prophetic people who dwelt by the Dead Sea and perished in the fall of Jerusalem, come nearer to our lives than the ancestral wisdom of barbarians, who fed their swine on the Hercynian acorns.” And he adds : “We are to account mind, not matter, ideas, not force, the spiritual property that gives dignity, grace and intellectual value to history and its action on the ascending life of man.”

Then if this be so, the prophets of Israel are the

men who should be known above all others in the Sacred History ; and once known, the whole of the Bible comes into place. That, at any rate, is the suggestion I venture to make. Resolutely turn the attention of schools, congregations, Bible classes from the earlier less edifying parts of the book ; concentrate in whatever way practical teachers can, upon the last and central period, and we shall have exactly that kind of order which previous ages of Christian culture have sought in vain, an order consistent both with fact and with the requirements of Christianity.

Let me briefly summarise certain advantages which might follow from the bold adoption of this four-stage order of Scripture :—

(1) It satisfies the need which exists for a strong theory of Biblical order, one that is truer than the old, and worthy to replace it.

(2) It can guide the makers of schemes, head masters and education committees, in the choice of subjects. They will not ask their scholars to perform feats of mental gymnastics by extracting divine truth now from Numbers, now from St. John.

(3) The next generation will be able to move freely among the finer parts of Revelation. It is deplorable how few people have the requisite grounding for listening with profit to a chapter of Isaiah.

(4) The theory advocated has apologetic value.

Half the attacks on the Old Testament become so much waste paper when Christians begin to see clearly what the older books can and what they cannot give them.

(5) If it be known that, quite early, teachers may be instilling into children ideas of God which belong to a semi-barbaric stage of thought, then they will wake up out of the deep slumber which the Bible at present casts upon them. Inquiry will be made as to what they are to teach, and an interest be taken once more in reading up for the Scripture Lesson.

(6) The scheme fits in with so much that has to be known by missionaries and those who now work amongst idolatrous nations. The historic and actual victory of the One Holy Spiritual Being achieved by and through the prophets, breathes hope amid the manifold superstitions of East and West.

(7) Lastly, the spiritually-minded man moves more readily along these lines than he has ever had the chance of doing before. After all his theories of accommodation, and efforts at harmony, and tendency to mysticism and allegory, he comes to a quiet haven. He traces the blossoming out of a desert garden of those very truths which he loves, and marvels, as he does so, at the miraculous conception of a spiritual religion. The Psalmists sing to him from the peaks all the more wonderfully, because he knows that

they had their homes in very dark valleys far apart.

All these considerations may fairly be said to point one way. There is awaiting the Scriptures a new lease of life. The time has come when the scientific methods of our forefathers and the mild illustrative way of our fathers do not fit the lock. To each age its own way of finding fact and truth founded on fact.

For long enough the Bible has stood out claiming to be full of fact. It does not cease making that claim. As unintelligible haphazard fact it becomes either the book of the Mormon and Boer or the sealed book of the ecclesiastical seminary; as intelligible fact it becomes an authority for pure religion.

A. F. MITCHELL.

II. THE USE OF THE BIBLE FOR CHRISTIAN EDIFICATION

In George Macdonald's "Alec Forbes of Howglen" there is the pregnant statement, "A practical interest is the strongest incitement to a theoretical acquaintance." The incident which occasions the comment is the schoolmaster's discovery that his scholar's rendering, with a remarkable accuracy, of a passage of Virgil having reference to the setting of sails is due to his being then engaged in building a boat for himself (Chapter xxiv.). This saying brings us into the very heart of our present subject. The use of the Bible for Christian edification should be "the strongest incitement" to the thorough and careful study of it.

There are two interests that may be the motives of such study. There is the scholarly interest: the Bible appeals to the mind of man as literature, as religious literature, even when there is no personal conviction regarding the truth and the worth of the religion it enshrines. The sacred books of other religions are being studied by Christian scholars in order that they may be known and understood; so also may the Bible be. This kind of study is not to be depreciated, for some have

engaged in it who have contributed much that is of great value to an intelligent appreciation of distinctive characteristics of the Bible. They have displayed a patience, industry, and honesty in their work, which those who have expounded and defended the Bible as the authoritative literature of their personal faith have not always succeeded in showing. With this scholarly interest we are not at present directly concerned, but with the religious interest; the Bible ought to be studied for the enlightenment and quickening of the moral and religious life of the student. It is evident that this interest will direct the attention otherwise than the scholarly interest.

Dr. Ward, one of the greatest of living psychologists, has pointed out that the content of our knowledge depends on the direction of our attention, and that that is determined by a selective interest. An artist and an angler will not see the same things on a river bank, because they are looking for things different. There are minutiae of textual, literary, and historical criticism, which are of utmost importance for the scholar, but which have no interest for the devout reader. A text that has the marrow of divine truth and grace in it may involve no problems, and suggest no solutions to the scholar. The Gospel according to John is full of difficulties and perplexities for the scholar; it abounds in the most satisfying spiritual nourishment for the soul of the Christian. Those passages

in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians which deal with his relations to the Twelve are of primary importance for the scholar concerned with the history of the Apostolic Church; they awaken only a moderate interest in the student who is seeking help and guidance for his own life.

Does the difference of interest, which we may freely and fully acknowledge, necessitate or justify a difference of method? Can scholarship go on without devotion, and devotion without scholarship? As regards the former, it may be said confidently that no religious literature will yield up its secret to ability without sympathy. In the Bible there are spiritual things which can be only spiritually discerned. The undevout cannot fully know and thoroughly understand the literature of devotion. Biblical science needs, indeed, Christian piety.

As regards the latter, it is often assumed that any way of treating the Bible that is found profitable for the religious life is legitimate and desirable, although it may be entirely contrary to the method of study recognised by scholarship. How dangerous is this assumption will appear, I think, if we consider what is the intention, and it must be added in large measure the result of the use of this method of scholarship. It is nothing less, and nothing else than to get at the meaning of the writers themselves. It is in that, surely, and not in a sense imposed on their words accidentally and arbitrarily,

that the mind of the Spirit is to be discovered. If that be so, then the treatment of the Bible in which the requirements of this method of study are entirely disregarded is not according to truth; and I at least am convinced that what is not of truth cannot be for profit.

The *allegorical* method stands condemned by modern scholarship, and yet it is to be feared that it is still in common use for Christian edification. This method, instead of endeavouring to find out the actual meaning of a passage, puts on it the sense which the reader's own imagination, reasoning, or emotion may suggest. The soul in this method seeks and finds a reflection of its own beliefs and feelings in the Bible instead of receiving the revelation of the divine mind and will which it contains.

It is sometimes argued that ignorant, uneducated persons cannot use their Bible in any other way, and that the Holy Spirit often guides them into Divine truth and grace along these ways which modern scholarship disapproves. Let it be freely and fully conceded that those who live the life hid with Christ in God gain a moral insight and a spiritual discernment, which enables them to get at the very core of the Divine revelation in the Bible; but it is their godliness and not their ignorance that enables them to get what they do out of their reading of the Bible. Have they not often quaint fancies, grotesque imaginations that may help to

edify them, but would certainly not be for the common edification of the Christian Church? But when there is the opportunity of knowledge, ignorance is blameworthy. With the same godliness knowledge can get more out of the Bible than ignorance.

Especially must teachers beware of imparting to their scholars views of the teaching of the Bible which their fuller knowledge may afterwards contradict. It is in this way that scepticism sometimes begins. When the young man or the young woman begins reading independently, the instruction of a pious teacher is found in conflict with the accepted opinions of Christian scholars, and the shock may be so great as to overthrow all definite convictions. But even for his own sake the teacher should avoid this schism in his own inner life. He cannot, and he ought not to insulate himself from the information on these matters that is now current everywhere. He ought to be informed on all the matters that relate to the knowledge and understanding of the Bible; and if he is so informed, it should be impossible for him, without a sense of insincerity, even to make the attempt to use the Bible for his own profit in any way which is not according to truth.

It seems to be taken for granted that the study of the Bible for Christian edification will be less profitable as it is more truthful. Let me, then, endeavour to show that the method of scholarship

is not a foe, but a friend to devotion. It is the conception of the Divine revelation that the modern method yields that the devout student is always to maintain; he need not be concerned about the problems scholarship is seeking to solve.

(1) Firstly, then, he is to think of revelation as *personal*: God has inspired not words, but men; and to get at the meaning of their words we must get into vital sympathy with the men. There is much in Paul's Epistles into which we shall read our own meaning, which is a much poorer thing than the Apostle's, unless we can place ourselves at his standpoint, see the questions with his eyes, feel the dangers with his heart. Here comes in the value of the information we can gather about the authors, the dates, the occasions of the books.

(2) Secondly, he is to think of revelation as *progressive*: the study of the Old Testament for Christian edification is beset with two dangers. The first is to impose a Christian meaning on the Old Testament words; the second is to impose on Christian faith and duty the Old Testament meaning. We miss a valuable lesson regarding God's way of awakening in man the hope of immortality, if we straightway take the last verse of the seventeenth Psalm as a statement of the Resurrection in the full Christian sense. "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." Christian morality and piety alike has suffered

from accepting principles and practices of the Old Testament as of permanent validity. The idea of God and the ideal for man of the Puritan had much more of the severity of the Law than of the graciousness of the Gospel, and that involved loss and injury.

(3) Let the Christian student, *thirdly*, always recognise that revelation is *perfect in Christ alone*; and that prophets and apostles alike must ever be tested by the teaching, example, and spirit of Jesus. As has already been indicated, a New Testament meaning must not be imposed on the Old Testament words: but we may profitably study the Old Testament to find in it the needs He meets, the hopes He fulfils, the progress He completes. So in the New Testament through evangelical testimony and apostolic interpretation the endeavour must always be to come into the presence of Christ Himself, know the truth, and prove the grace.

(4) Lastly, it must not be forgotten that the revelation is *practical*. We abuse the Bible if we try to wrest from it answers to curious, speculative questions about heaven or hell, the past of the world, or its future, or to get from it information about matters that science can teach us. The chief end of revelation is *redemptive*; it reveals God and man in their relation as the Father who by His grace saves and the sinner needing salvation. Guidance for faith and duty—that we should seek, and that we shall find in the Bible. It is infallible

in leading men to Christ, who is both the image of, and the way to God.

In closing it must be added that the use of the Bible for Christian edification will lead us into a region above and beyond the method of scholarship. In religion there is a contact of the soul of man with the Spirit of God. The Bible studied, as has been already indicated, is fitted to be the occasion of such contact. Under the illumination and impulse of the Spirit of God to moral insight and spiritual discernment will be given visions and voices of God, that no amount of scholarship can of itself attain. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." Not other meanings than the literal will be imposed on the words of Scripture as in the allegorical method, but the truth of the seer will reveal profounder depths and the grace of the saint sublimer heights than appear to the common eye. God Himself will be realised more vitally than the words themselves declare.

The revelation of the Scriptures is a living, and, therefore, a growing unfolding of the mind and heart of God. In objective content there is no progress above or beyond Christ ; but in subjective apprehension and appreciation there may be advance. The developing experience of the Christian will legitimately invest the words of Scripture with suggestions and associations that open the door of finite human language and give free access to the Divine truth and grace. Let the Bible be known

and understood properly, and through the true sense of the words the deeper meanings will come. The use of the Bible for Christian edification starts from a different interest, and reaches a different result, but uses the same method as the scholarly study.

A. E. GARVIE.

THE ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER

IN our discussions the ideal teacher is too much with us. His presence introduces a feeling of unreality about all that we say. The teacher as we find him in our Sunday Schools is so unlike what we declare he ought to be, that we are apt to be unduly depressed. Experienced superintendents point out that we must take what we get, and be thankful. The last two words are added mainly for ornament, as the expression is seldom used in anything like a thankful spirit. We expect too much from our teachers. No doubt we cannot set too high ideals before us ; but we must not blind ourselves to the fact that teachers may be capable of exceedingly good work, though they are far below the standard of the ideal. We must remember that the work of the world is carried on mainly by average persons.

Yet we rightly feel that we are not in a position to accept any one who is willing, or who can be persuaded, to become a Sunday School teacher.

There must be a process of selection. It is here that the weary superintendent is apt to become very grim. He tells us that we have to take what we can get, or go without. The challenge must be accepted. If we cannot get the sort of teachers we want, then we must boldly adopt the alternative, and do without. It is not absolutely necessary that a particular Sunday School should go on; but if it does go on, it is absolutely necessary that the work should be done satisfactorily.

Accordingly, it becomes a matter of the first importance that we should determine the minimum qualifications we are entitled to exact, before we accept the services of a Sunday School teacher. "The essential equipment of the Sunday School teacher" may refer to the ideal teacher, to the merely good teacher, or to the teacher who is just not bad enough to be rejected. Our best plan will be to deal with the minimum requirements as basis, and work in our higher demands after we have determined the lower limit. There are at least five essentials, of which the first three are largely of the nature of data. The teacher either has or has not certain qualities. If he has them, good and well; if he has them not, they cannot be imparted, and all the superintendent can do is to refuse his services.

The first essential is that the teacher should be a person of character. It goes without saying that he must lead a blameless life. But this is not

enough, even as a minimum. He must have character in the more positive sense of exercising a distinct moral force as an individual. He need not be a powerful personality, but he must be at least a personality that can be distinguished from other personalities. He must not be in danger of the condemnation that befel the soul of Tomlinson.

The second essential is concerned with the nature of the matter to be taught. The teacher must have a firm belief in the things he teaches. There must be no teaching of one thing "for the good of the pupil," while the teacher believes something quite different. It will be observed that this condition involves no restriction regarding the things to be believed. That is a totally different question, and is to be treated at another sederunt. But whatever it is agreed that the teacher should teach, must be taught with full conviction. In ordinary secular teaching there *may* be occasions where it is permissible to teach certain doctrines with which we are not in intellectual agreement; but in religious teaching there does not seem to be room for this aloofness. A minimum qualification, then, is that the teacher should believe all that he teaches, and that he should believe enough to make it worth while teaching.

The third essential is that the teacher should have sympathy with the young. Just as the teacher cannot believe to order, so he cannot be sympathetic to order. A certain amount of sym-

pathy with the young must be assumed as a minimum qualification. But the teacher may take means to increase this sympathy by cultivating it. Sympathy involves knowledge. We cannot sympathise with what is quite foreign to ourselves. By increasing our knowledge of children we may develop our sympathy with them. But the kind of knowledge is of importance. It is not essential that the teacher should have a scientific knowledge of childhood. All that is required is that he should not have forgotten what it is like to be young. If he is able to throw himself back into the past, and live over again his early experiences, he is on the direct road to the most serviceable knowledge of his pupils. This is the minimum, and cannot be regarded as more than a beginning of the study of the young. On the other hand, there is a distinct danger in child study, if attention is not continually directed to the point of view. The teacher must throughout his study seek to know the child by putting himself, so far as possible, in the place of the child, and regarding the world from the child's standpoint. So soon as the child becomes a mere "subject" for investigation, child-study has ceased to be of practical value to the teacher. Our pupils must never become mere specimens.

The fourth demand is one that is never likely to be overlooked. Everybody is willing to admit that a knowledge of the subjects to be taught forms an essential part of the teacher's equipment.

There are those indeed who are puzzled to know what else *is* essential but this knowledge. In Sunday School we are less liable than are the professional schoolmasters to over-emphasise the value of mere knowledge. After all, we feel that in our work the important thing is not what our pupil knows, but what our pupil *is*. Our work is to mould character rather than to impart knowledge. Some of the best Sunday School work has been done by people who are what the world would call ignorant. The whole spirit of Christianity is opposed to those who despise the unlettered. Yet the very word "teacher" has now become associated with the communication of knowledge, and a large part of the work of our Sunday School teachers consists in communicating a certain kind of knowledge. This knowledge is communicated not for its own sake as mere knowledge, but as a means towards an end. We teach certain things in order that our pupils may become better men and women. Knowledge is used, in fact, as an instrument.

But whatever its purpose, knowledge quite obviously forms a part of the essential equipment of the Sunday School teacher, and the question naturally arises: How much knowledge must we demand as a minimum? On the one hand it may be said with truth that the teacher cannot teach what he does not himself clearly know. On the other, it is possible for a teacher to be quite

efficient in dealing with a given subject, and yet have a very inadequate knowledge of that subject in comparison with specialists who have made it their life-work. Even in the mere communication of knowledge as knowledge it is now generally admitted that those who are only a little ahead of their pupils, are not able to teach so successfully as those who have a wider sweep, and are able to understand the subject in all its relations and thus to arrange the elements in the way that best leads to a comprehension of the subject as a whole. Those who know only the rudiments of a subject very frequently give a wrong exposition of some of the elements, since the connection of these elements with the deeper parts of the subject is at that stage not known to the teacher. At what stage of knowledge, then, it may fairly be asked, is a teacher entitled to deal with a given subject? In order to answer we have to distinguish between the matter of a subject, and the way in which that matter is known. The question is not so much: What does the teacher know? as How does the teacher know?

To begin with, the teacher must know his subject accurately, so far as his knowledge extends. His pupils must not be called upon afterwards to unlearn anything that he has taught them. On the other hand, it may well be that at future stages, his pupils, if they desire to acquire a mastery over the subject studied, may have to add very con-

siderably to the knowledge the teacher is at present able to give. The ideal Sunday School teacher must know completely and accurately all the literary details about the Bible, and all the historical, geographical, archæological and other references. But it is not at all necessary that these matters should be known in any detail or with any extreme degree of accuracy in the case of the "minimum" candidate. Mistakes in these matters are regrettable incidents in teaching, but they are not of fundamental importance.

It goes without saying that the teacher cannot know too much about his subject. The lower limit is more difficult to fix. If pressed for a statement of the minimum knowledge qualification of a Sunday School teacher I should be inclined to say that he must have a knowledge of his own limitations. Perhaps the surest mark of the educated man is that he knows the limits of his knowledge. If the unlettered Sunday School teacher realises his own ignorance, he will make the minimum number of those technical mistakes that lead to the loss of the respect of his better educated pupils.

But from the point of view of the teacher the real knowledge, the knowledge that counts, is the kind that is not merely an acquirement, but an assimilation. Such knowledge has not merely passed through the teacher's mind, it has become a part of himself. It is not merely a possession.

Knowledge that is not thus worked up into the very being of the knower is not dynamic: it is not the knowledge that is power.

Not all knowledge is worthy of being thus incorporated, and the less worthy kind is that in which mistakes are not of vital importance in Sunday School teaching. The lessons of the Bible may be living truths worked into the warp and woof of the teacher's nature, even though that teacher is very imperfectly informed on many points, as, for example, on the manners and customs of Biblical times.

As a working arrangement, the minimum knowledge-qualification may be said to be: a general education sufficient to enable the teacher to make an intelligent use of the "aids" published in the various Sunday School magazines. This implies that he is not only able to receive the information there supplied and pass it on to his pupils, but that he can assimilate what he reads, and use it as a means of expressing his message in a way that is fundamentally his own.

The fifth essential qualification of the teacher is a certain degree of skill in instruction. If he can have a course of training so much the better. But, as a minimum, he must be able to communicate his knowledge in such a way as to gain his ultimate ends. These cannot be attained if he can do no more than communicate knowledge. He must not repel his pupils by his clumsiness,

though it is not demanded that, as a minimum qualification, he must teach according to the most approved methods. At this point we have to keep quite distinct two things that are often confounded. The successful teacher must fulfil two conditions: he must keep his class in good order, and he must communicate his knowledge in a reasonably good form. Both conditions are indispensable. A man may be able to maintain excellent order, and yet be unable to teach. On the other hand, a man may know and be able to apply the best method of teaching, and may never get the chance of beginning to teach because he is unable to maintain order. Maintaining discipline is possible only to those who have a certain strength of character. This quality has been already set forth as our first essential. If the teacher has not the necessary power to keep his class in order, then he falls below the requisite minimum, and must be rejected. As to method, there is more hope. A man's method may be improved by instruction from without, though no amount of instruction can put a backbone into a man who is naturally invertebrate.

Even those teachers who ostentatiously proclaim that they know nothing about method, exemplify in their teaching quite a distinct method. This may be a good method or a bad one. It is a method all the same. In by far the majority of cases the method is a traditional one, having been

handed down from many generations of Sunday School teachers. Some maintain that they teach by the light of nature. They say that they have formed their own methods without help from any one. That they have ultimately formed an individual method need not be denied: but that they invented this method is a mis-statement. In almost every case it will be found, on investigation, that teachers who make this assertion have formed their first method upon that followed by their own Sunday School teachers. As they were themselves taught, so they teach others. Unfortunately, the teacher who has made most impression upon them, because he is the most recent influence, is usually the teacher of the highest class; and as the young teacher generally makes a beginning with a very junior class, we have the serious blunder of applying senior methods to junior classes.

The case is even worse with those who have not themselves been taught at a Sunday School. With them the inevitable imitation is applied to the sermons they have heard from the pulpit; with the result that children in the lower school are treated on a method that is difficult even for grown people. That this is not an exaggerated picture, may be shown by the fact that at University training colleges the masters of method have continually to fight against the tendency their students have to begin their school teaching

on the model of the work done by their professors in the University class-room. The training college staff have to spend a great deal of time in making their students aware of the need to distinguish between the instruction given to students and that suitable for children. It is in preventing this vicious circle of imitation that books of method and normal courses for Sunday School teachers do their best work. A high degree of technical skill is not always attainable, but in the Sunday School mere technical skill is of much less importance than in a secular school.

JOHN ADAMS.

TEACHER TRAINING

A SUNDAY School teacher must be a man of earnest Christian convictions, and full of that purposeful enthusiasm that compels him to impart to others that which he knows and loves. He must have a high ideal of the privilege and the responsibility of teaching, and a strong determination to make his life a living example of what he teaches. On the basis of upright Christian character and a willingness to learn, the ordinary man can be *trained* to become a true teacher, an uplifting personal power among young people.

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE.

1. The first requirement of his training is an opportunity of systematic Bible instruction. The groundwork of this is laid in the school life (Day and Sunday School), and fuller knowledge should be given in the upper classes of the Sunday School, the minister's class, or in the Church Institute classes. This side of his training should be the special duty of the pastor of the Church; and Christian congregations should recognise this as

one of the most important features of Church work, and for this purpose should provide a Teachers' Library of Reference Books. I know that many of our young men hesitate to become teachers because they have little knowledge, or the means of obtaining it. The presence in a Church and its Sunday School of an earnest band of Bible students would be an incalculable benefit to all congregational agencies.

2. Closely connected with this instruction in Bible knowledge, and second only to it in importance, is the need for instruction in the Principles and the Art of teaching. The Sunday School teacher must not only have Christian convictions and sound Bible knowledge, but he must have tact and skill in imparting his knowledge. He must study the child, his ways, and methods of thought; he must present his knowledge in an attractive form, stimulating from his intense sympathy the best powers of his class, coming down naturally to its level of intelligence and uplifting it to higher things.

LECTURES ON THE PRINCIPLES AND ART OF TEACHING.

(a) A series of lectures should be given by a skilled teacher on the elementary principles of teaching, as the foundations of method to all Sunday School teachers, before beginning to teach;

and a more advanced series should be continued during the early years of his teacherhood, dealing mainly with difficulties to be encountered and overcome, and the best methods in special circumstances, and under special conditions. Surely there is no district where a skilled practical teacher cannot be got, either voluntarily or for a moderate honorarium, to give such lectures to earnest students, and from his manifold experience to give suggestive help and advice? I have found in such classes the use of a small text-book (like Professor Adams' little treatise) of great service, and that, with the writing out of notes of lectures, soon leads to thought, discussion, and study among the students. The village teacher would find in this employment as much congenial benefit as does the principal of a great city school; and the Union should spare no pains to get the best men all over the country to undertake this duty.

MODEL LESSONS.

(b) By means of model lessons on Saturday afternoons, when the lesson for next day can be taken by a skilled teacher with a class drawn from a local Sunday School, much benefit is done to young teachers in showing how a lesson should be treated—which they have to take next day. And the good resulting from such meetings is enhanced if the teacher, after the children have been dis-

missed, discusses with the students the methods he has adopted in the lesson. In Leeds we arrange not only that these model lessons are taken in different districts by different teachers, but also that different types of lessons are given—Junior, Intermediate, and Senior—so that Sunday School teachers may have an opportunity of seeing different practical methods, such as would be adopted in a well-graded school.

CONFERENCES OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND TEACHERS.

(c) The superintendent should also hold meetings with his teachers for the exposition and discussion of methods, in order that the whole staff may be brought into intelligent co-operation and mutual sympathy. Such conferences are held in all good day schools, and form the very foundations of curriculum, tone, and discipline, and are beneficial in training teachers in the true relation of class-work to the whole-school work.

3. Every care should be taken not only in selecting and training teachers, but also in utilising their special gifts. One with musical talent can be held responsible for the singing; another with business-like aptitude can be for the time turned to secretarial duties—statistics, lists, &c.; and another of similar abilities to finance details; while the book-lover should be entrusted with the charge of the library. The athletic

teacher could be a power for good in fostering a fair, manly spirit in the scholars' games; and many a woman teacher has a gift, denied to men, of "making socials go," and of "making trips a success." Whatever touches the life of children the personal influence of the Sunday School teacher may sanctify to noble ends.

THE RECOGNITION BY CONGREGATIONS OF CHRISTIAN PARENTS OF THE IMPORTANT DUTIES OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.

4. The duties of congregations are equally clear. If the demands on the time and energies of Sunday School teachers are so great, they must see that "the willing horses" are not overburdened or overdriven. They must relieve them from many other forms of Church work by doing their own share of it. If to Sunday School teachers Christian parents entrust a part of the spiritual instruction of their children, and insist that *that* shall be of the best, they must be considerate to the Sunday School teachers in their efforts to improve themselves for their work. The difficulty of getting teachers to attend training classes in Leeds is often due to the numerous engagements in other congregational schemes.

THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

5. In the practical training of Sunday School teachers the value of the International Lessons

must be considered, as to many teachers at present they are the sole means of enlightenment and suggestion. No doubt these could be improved by making several collateral series—suitable for Junior, Intermediate and Senior scholars; or the same end might be obtained by suggestions being made as to the treatment of the same lessons to suit different grades in the schools. But better than all published notes are the “Notes of Lesson” drawn up by the teacher himself. With the subject before him all the week, and the matter early planned out, he can ponder over it in his leisure, prove it in the fire of his own experience, and hammer it out on the anvil of his own thought. With such preparation, a lesson tempered with tact and loving sympathy becomes a credit to the teacher and a boon to the taught. Herein we have the ideal teacher and the ideal lesson!

In making out this outline I have dealt with methods that can be adopted in all districts, large or small, and that can be carried out by the local associations with the help and guidance of the central authority of the Sunday School Union. In looking over my notes, I find that I have referred almost entirely to the man teacher. This is due not to any want of appreciation of the devotion and skill of lady teachers, but rather to a desire to put the subject in a brief and suggestive form.

DAVID FORSYTH.

THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

I. WHAT HAVE THEY DONE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS?

AS would be anticipated, the emergence in 1872 of the Lesson scheme which became International was the result of the conditions existing in the Sunday School world at that period. And it is necessary rapidly to outline the courses of Lesson Study adopted by British and American Sunday Schools before this epoch.

BRITISH LESSON SCHEMES FROM 1815 TO 1874.

Until the formation of the Sunday School Union in July, 1803, the Sunday School Society which preceded it (founded in 1785) limited its operations to the establishment of new schools, the supply of Bibles, and the payment of teachers. If it is asked from what selection of subjects were those children taught who were able to read the Bible, an answer is not easy. "The data,"

says Mr. W. H. Groser (Senior Hon. Secretary of the Sunday School Union) "are so scanty. Doubtless in a large number of cases each teacher chose from Sunday to Sunday what he or she deemed most suitable or interesting, but the need for some more systematic provision would soon be recognised. As far back as the year 1786, when that eccentric but genuine philanthropist, Jonas Hanway, published his 'Comprehensive View of Sunday Schools,' some brief extracts from Scripture were appended to his treatise, together with a few moral tales and 'lectures,' following sundry columns of spelling. As the interest felt by Christian ministers of various denominations widened and deepened, and especially when those schools became affiliated with particular Churches and congregations, they would naturally be led to see the necessity for more systematic Bible teaching, and would draw up lists for the use of their respective schools. This we know some of them did. In Sunday Schools belonging to the Church of England the lectionary would be resorted to for the Scripture portions used in instructing the children.

"For the Sunday School which I attended when a boy in the City of London, the committee had compiled and printed annual sets of lessons in the form of small books, as early as the thirties. Probably these served as pioneers to the Union lists, especially as some of the officers of the

Silver Street Sunday School were also members of the Executive of the Sunday School Union."

At the first public meeting convened by the Committee of the Sunday School Union, in 1812, it was reported that among the then very limited number of the Society's printed publications was "A Short List of Scriptures Designed as a Guide to Teachers for a Course of Reading in Sunday Schools." This list was prepared in 1805 by a layman (Alderman John Heard, of Nottingham), and it will be noted that it was provided for reading purposes. Though not a periodical publication, it was the germ from which all subsequent lists of lesson-subjects developed.

In 1816 a Select Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to consider and report on "The Education of the Lower Orders of the Metropolis." From the evidence then given one gets glimpses of the conditions amid which the Sunday School worked in the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. Large numbers of the children were employed in the week, and consequently attended no day school. In Hoxton, out of seventy-three children gathered into a Sunday School, only two could read, and these not sufficiently to read in the New Testament. The schools usually met three times on a Sunday. The morning and afternoon sessions were devoted to reading and spelling, Bible and Testament classes, catechism, repetition of Scripture and

hymns. At the evening session Scripture was rehearsed. The classes were small, and it is significant of the "mothering" that the school had to undertake at this time that the teachers were required to see that the hands and faces of the scholars were clean, and that they were decently clothed. Writing was taught gratuitously on week evenings. It was found that on an average it took a child three years to learn to read, and that scholars rarely stayed more than two years in a school. "Not only juvenile illiteracy, but also the high prices of Bibles and Testaments, tended to restrict their use. The schools were poor, and the parents of the children were poor likewise; and a Bible at 3s. 7d., or even a Testament at 1s. 3d.—the prices charged in 1825—could be obtained only in very limited numbers. As elementary education extended, first the spelling-books, and after some further interval the reading-books, gave place to the cheapened Bible, which thus gradually won its fitting place as the text-book of the Sunday School."¹

This was not a time when much systematic Bible study could be undertaken, and it was inevitable that the religious instruction given should be a reflex of that given in the pulpit. The chief aims were to convict of sin and to

¹ See "A Hundred Years' Work for the Children," p. 35. By W. H. Groser, B.Sc. 1903. (Sunday School Union.)

awaken trust in the Saviour. These aims must indeed ever be central with the school, but developed in the shadow of adultism they tended to make teaching "sermonic." The effort was less to inform the mind and to co-ordinate facts and doctrines into an intellectual system than to impress the heart and conscience. In such conditions lesson schemes are not likely to be much emphasised. All that will be felt to be necessary will be a course of studies from Scripture which provide doctrinal opportunities.

Yet very early it was seen to be advantageous for all children in the school to have the same Bible lesson, and lesson schemes began to multiply. In 1838 the late Mr. Robert Mimpriss published for schools and families "Our Lord's Life and Ministry," arranged in a series of lessons, "narrative, practical, and geographical," and illustrated by charts. The lessons gave a general outline of the words and works of Jesus, constructed from a harmony of the Gospels, and were a serious effort to promote continuity in study, and to give an intelligent grasp of the Gospel history. Each lesson began with narrative, and was followed by a series of questions and practical inferences "for example and warning." Mr. Mimpriss' publications included a variety of pictorial and chronological charts, maps, and Scripture prints, which were hailed by the religious journals as "forming a new era in Scriptural education."

THE FIRST UNIFORM LESSONS.

Two years later (1840) the Sunday School Union stepped into the field with a double list of Scripture Lessons for Sunday Schools for "Testament" and "Bible" Classes respectively, each providing a morning and an afternoon lesson from the Old or New Testament for every Sunday in the year. In 1842 the distinction between Bible and Testament classes was abandoned, and the morning and afternoon readings were made to bear upon the same subject. The lists from 1840 to 1842 embraced the following topics:—

1840 (2 LISTS).

1. Testament Class. Morning: "Acts of the Apostles."
Afternoon: "Life of Christ."
2. Bible Class. Morning: "Genesis and Exodus." Afternoon: "Life of our Lord."

1841 (2 LISTS).

1. Testament Class. Morning: "Life of our Lord." Afternoon: "Acts of the Apostles."
2. Bible Class. Morning: Judges and Kings of Israel. Afternoon: Acts and Selection from Epistles' teaching—Christianity in relation to Business, Charity, Obedience to Parents, &c.

1842 (1 List).

Varied selection from all parts of New Testament—on the Attributes of the Deity, the Work of Christ, the Work of the Holy Spirit, and the Duties of the Young Christian.

These annual lists were published by the Sunday School Union until the International Lesson system was launched in 1874, and they are to some extent repeated in the courses of Lessons for the Morning School, which are still published annually along with the International.

SCOTLAND.

During this period there was a remarkable quickening in the appreciation of the school as an educational institution. In Scotland, for example, as the excellent handbook on "The Sabbath School and Bible Teaching," by James Inglis,¹ shows, great value was attached to order, connection, and all that makes for historical knowledge of Scripture. The importance of the infant school was fully recognised, and stress was laid upon adequate preparation for teaching. One of the earliest lesson schemes published in Scotland was prepared by the Glasgow Sabbath School Union, and issued in 1846. The list was doctrinal in character, and the subjects began with "Man is a lost and helpless sinner," and traced the main outlines of Christian doctrine, closing with "The Intercession of Christ," "Christ will raise the dead," "Christ will judge the world," "Christ should be worshipped." A portion of Scripture was appointed to be committed to memory, and parallel passages were also indicated to complete the study of each topic.

¹ Published in Edinburgh in 1850.

WALES.

In Wales the Church was in the Sunday School from the first, and its distinctive note was the catechetical method. The school usually met in the chapel, the younger children being sent into some adjoining room.

“Both officers and teachers,” says the Rev. H. Elvet Lewis, “were severally elected for a period of six or twelve months—the terms of office varying from time to time. All the scholars (except the infant classes), as well as the teachers, voted in the election of superintendent and secretary; then each class, successively, had two or three names submitted to it, and the one who had the largest number of votes became its teacher. It is to be borne in mind that most of the classes were composed of adults, or of young men and women.

“Three Sundays were given to a chapter, or portion of a chapter, of some twenty verses; slightly more or less as the case might be. Most of the teacher’s work was done by asking questions, rather than by commenting himself. On the afternoon of the fourth Sunday—that being invariably the monthly Communion Sunday—the entire school occupied the gallery only, the members of each class sitting together. The chapter or monthly portion was recited either class by class, or by the whole of the classes in

unison ; though, perhaps, 'intoning' would more approximately describe it than 'reciting.' Then the minister questioned the school as to the contents of the monthly portion ; and as he was an expert catechist, he knew how to adapt his questions to the capacity of each class in turn. Sometimes a difference of opinion would arise on some moot theological point ; he would allow the discussion to widen and to catch fire occasionally ; but he knew when to intervene and save the discussion from becoming a mere dispute." This system has bound the Welsh Sunday Schools closely to the Churches, and has given them their distinctive character.

These notes are sufficient to show that the principle of a Uniform Lesson was accepted and adopted by many schools as far back as 1842, but that the majority of schools in England followed independent lines. In Wales and Scotland the school was more closely attached to the church, and the lesson courses came more under ministerial and denominational direction. In England, at any rate, the educational and philanthropic impulses that were marked features in the Sunday School, while the State took a languid interest in education and reform, gradually lost force as day-schools became more numerous and efficient and the condition of the masses improved. The religious impulse, always powerful, thus became supreme, and the teaching tended to become more

and more evangelistic and hortatory. It is also worthy of note, since the fact is not without a bearing upon the curriculum of the schools, that until 1821 it was "the custom honourably to dismiss all scholars who had reached the age of fourteen if their conduct had been satisfactory. This was done publicly by the superintendent or minister, with the gift of a Bible and a few words of kindly commendation and counsel." ¹

AMERICAN LESSON SYSTEMS BEFORE 1872.

To trace in detail even the successful systems in use in the United States prior to 1872 would require a volume. All that is possible is to give a rough outline of the more notable; and for the opportunity of doing this I am indebted to the Rev. Edwin Wilbur Rice, D.D. (Editor-in-Chief of the publications of the American Sunday School Union).

The oldest Sunday School society in America is the existing "First Day, or Sunday School, Society," of Philadelphia, which was founded in 1791 to give instruction in reading and writing from the Bible, and generally to promote the religious welfare of children. The teachers were paid about £25 a year for their services.

This plan of instruction gave way in 1816 to *The Unlimited Memorising Lessons*, which, taking the Scripture list issued by the British Sunday

¹ "A Hundred Years' Work for the Children," p. 37.

School Union as a basis, devoted the entire time of the session to reading, memorising, and reciting long passages of Scripture.

But very soon an improved system of lessons was desired, and a plan for systematising the course of instruction from the Scriptures came into use in 1825. Selected portions were arranged for every Sabbath in the year, comprising from ten to twenty verses, the same lesson *being used throughout the school*. This system became known as *The Limited Uniform Lessons*. The first year's course was upon the Life and Works of Jesus. So popular did this course become, that a five years' scheme was based upon it, designed to cover the whole Bible. The following is an outline of the scheme :—

FIRST YEAR.—The Life and Works of Jesus.

SECOND YEAR.—The Parables and Teaching of Jesus.

THIRD YEAR.—Lessons from the Epistles and Revelation.

FOURTH YEAR.—Old Testament Prophecies and Narratives.

FIFTH YEAR.—The Book of the Acts.

Out of this course also sprang a series of Helps, including "Judson's Questions on the Lessons," which were graded in three sections of growing difficulty. These questions achieved a wide popularity, and were printed and circulated in England by the Religious Tract Society.

The scheme as a whole proved very successful ; but some workers missed the old custom of memo-

rising Scripture, and these were attracted by the Moravian plan of committing to memory one verse of Scripture each day, and then making these seven verses the subject of study on the following Sunday. The *Verse-a-day system* found favour in many parts of America, but it never took vigorous root.

A little later (about 1840) a nine years' course of studies (four in the Old Testament and five in the New) was issued by the American Sunday School Union, and was described as the *Union Lessons*. This system of Lessons made great use of questions, and as Lessons notes were issued week by week on the topics assigned, the system was more widely used than any or all of the systems then in use in America. The treatment of the Lesson was fivefold, based on a method recommended by Mr. James Gall—viz., narrative, questions, explanation, symbols, and practical lessons.

The use of the *Union Lessons* was largely broken down by the various denominations in America forming Sunday School Societies of their own, and desiring to have lesson courses shaped by themselves. Hence followed a period marked by what was humorously called "The Babel Series." But this period of individual effort led to a careful study of the needs of the schools, and to the publishing of *Graded Lessons* designed for Beginners and Advanced classes.

In this sketch we have given the chief schemes

only. There were many others issued that had greater or less popularity, such as McDowell's Lessons, the lessons of Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, the Rev. Dr. Breed, and others. Some of these lessons called for editions of 100,000 copies at a time. Nor is there space to do more than mention the Elementary Scripture Question Books in three series, prepared for beginners, and the graded series of "Bible Readers'" Lessons, made especially for the negro race.

EMERGENCE OF THE "INTERNATIONAL" LESSONS.

In 1864 Mr. D. L. Moody was conducting evangelistic services at Springfield, Illinois, and among those inspired with new zeal for the kingdom of Christ were Mr. B. F. Jacobs, of Chicago, and Dr. Eggleston. By a coincidence, which one must believe had the Divine Will behind it, at the same time, the Rev. J. H. Vincent, a Methodist minister of Chicago, floated the *Sunday School Teachers' Quarterly*, containing four optional series of lessons, one arranged from the British Sunday School Union's list. He was supported by the Chicago Sunday School Union, though his desire to establish a Uniform Lesson for all schools was opposed by Dr. Eggleston as repressive of individuality and freedom. In 1866 the *Quarterly* became a monthly, under the title of the *Sunday School Teacher*. This introduced a

new era, and for the first time complete lesson notes and scholars' papers were issued together. One scheme was Mr. Vincent's own. It was undenominational, and covered "two years with Jesus." Each lesson had a Golden Text, and Home Readings were provided.

In 1868 Mr. B. F. Jacobs tried to extend the principle of uniformity throughout the States. He induced the *Standard*, a Baptist weekly publication in Chicago, to begin printing weekly lesson notes prepared by himself, and with extraordinary enthusiasm and persistence he began to advocate the plan before conventions and to press it upon editors.

On August 8, 1871, at Mr. Jacobs' suggestion, and as a result of his personal efforts, representatives of twenty-nine publishing houses met in Chicago to consider a scheme of Uniform Lessons. The outcome of the discussion was that a committee of five was appointed to prepare a list. The five chosen were Dr. Eggleston, Dr. Vincent, Dr. Newton, Rev. H. C. McCook, and Mr. B. F. Jacobs. Next day three of them met and decided that the scheme was impossible, and sent a notice to that effect to the papers. At the next meeting, however, thanks to the presence and representations of B. F. Jacobs, the decision was reversed, and the Uniform Lesson plan was permitted to make its appeal to the world. At first not a single American denomination was favourable, for to accept it

meant rendering useless valuable plates and the copyrights of many series of Lesson Helps.

In 1872 the Fifth National Sunday School Convention met at Indianapolis, Indiana, and after full discussion voted in favour of a Uniform Lesson for all Sunday Schools. The first committee consisted of five clergymen and five laymen from the United States, and one clergyman and one layman from Canada, and it was appointed to select the first seven years' course (1873-1879). The course was to embrace a general study of the whole Bible, alternating between the Old and New Testaments semi-annually or quarterly. Every six years a new committee was elected by the Convention, the names being chosen by a specially appointed nominating committee. Meetings were to be held six or eight times during the six years, the expenses of travelling being paid by the publishers of the leading Lesson Helps. No other expenses were to be incurred.

The fundamental principles laid down by the Convention for the guidance of the Lesson Committee were :—

1. One lesson for all grades.
2. The Old Testament and the New Testament to be covered in equal portions.
3. The Course to be completed in six years.
4. A Temperance Lesson to be assigned once a quarter.

The Lessons prepared by this Committee secured,

at the very beginning of 1873, almost universal acceptance through America, and the Committee of the British Sunday School Union, before the close of the year, after a long conference with Dr. Vincent, adopted the series as their *Afternoon Lessons* from the beginning of 1874, which then became really International. Ever since they have co-operated with the American Lesson Committee in the preparation and issue of the Lessons.

GREAT BRITAIN CO-OPERATES.

At Atlanta, in 1878, the committee was increased by the addition of four members, including two corresponding members (Mr. F. J. Hartley and Mr. W. H. Groser) appointed by the British Sunday School Union.

The committee now consists of two sections, the British and the American, both collaborating in the construction of the Lesson courses. It may be of interest to give the names of each section as they appear to-day (February, 1907).

THE LESSON COMMITTEE.

American Section.

Rev. John Potts, D.D., Toronto (Chairman).

Rev. A. F. Schauffler, D.D., New York (Hon. Secretary).

Rev. O. P. Gifford, D.D., Buffalo.

Prof. C. R. Hemphill, D.D., Louisville.

Principal W. Patrick, D.D., Winnipeg.

John R. Pepper, Memphis.

Prof. Ira M. Price, Ph.D., Chicago.
Rev. Elson I. Rexford, M.A., LL.D., Montreal.
Rev. Mosheim Rhodes, D.D., St. Louis.
Rev. J. R. Sampey, D.D., LL.D., Denver.
Edwin L. Shuey, M.A., Dayton.
Prof. J. S. Stahr, D.D., Lancaster.
Rev. B. B. Tyler, D.D., Denver.
Bishop H. W. Warren, D.D., LL.D., Denver.

British Section.

Rev. Alfred Rowland, D.D. (Chairman).
W. H. Groser, B.Sc. (Hon. Secretary).
F. F. Belsey, J.P.
Rev. Alex. Connell, M.A. (since retired).
Rev. R. Culley.
Prof. S. W. Green, M.A.
Rev. S. S. Henshaw.
Rev. Frank Johnson.
Rev. C. H. Kelly.
Frederick Taylor.
Edward Towers.
Rev. W. J. Townsend, D.D. (since retired).
Charles Waters.

[The following have been elected members of the Committee since the Conference met :—Professor A. S. Peake, M.A., Principal W. F. Adeney, D.D., and Principal A. E. Garvie, D.D.]

The principle of one lesson for all grades has so far been modified that successive conventions have sanctioned the framing and issuing of optional courses for Beginners and Senior classes. A primary course of simple lesson subjects was decided on by both the English and the American

committees in 1894. The word "International," however, is not applied to these courses. A relaxation of the second principle of giving equal time to each Testament has also been permitted, the usual practice now being to two and a-half years to the Old Testament and three and a-half years to the New.

THE COMMITTEE'S METHOD OF WORK.

The method of work adopted by the American section of the International Sunday School Lesson Committee is thus described by Dr. A. F. Schauffler, the hon. secretary of the Lesson Committee:—

The life of each committee, which is appointed every six years by the International Sunday School Union, of course, governs its work in the selection of the Lessons. Each committee selects a six years' course. After the election of the committee a sub-committee is always appointed to block out a tentative six years' course in general outline, three and a-half years to be devoted to the New Testament and two and a-half years to the Old Testament. This outline is then submitted to the British section of the committee for suggestion. On its return from Great Britain it is then cast into its final shape. On that two sub-committees are appointed, one for the New Testament and one for the Old Testament lessons. These committees prepare the Lesson Topics and Golden Texts in detail. They are then presented to the full com-

mittee, which meets once in each calendar year, and forwarded for suggestion and criticism to the British section.

After such changes as the two committees agree upon, the result is printed as a "tentative outline," and is sent broadcast throughout the Sunday School world—namely, to all Sunday School writers in the United States, to the London Sunday School Union for distribution among their constituency, to Canada, to India, and elsewhere. Suggestions, criticisms, and emendations are solicited from all to whom the tentative course is submitted.

Of course, this has to be done far in advance of the time when the Lessons are to be used. For example, the tentative course for the year 1908 was sent out in the summer of 1905. Criticisms were returned and considered at the Lesson Committee's annual meeting last April. The result of the meeting was to issue an official final set of lessons for the year 1908, due consideration having been given to all the suggestions sent in from all over the Sunday School world. Not all these suggestions could be accepted. For example, from India came the request for more emphasis on the sin of idolatry. From others came the request for an annual "Patriotic Sunday," or one lesson a year on "Kindness to Animals," or more emphasis on "Governmental Corruption." It is clear from the above standpoint that the committee cannot adopt

all suggestions made. When the final lesson list is issued it is sent at once to the publishers for submission to their Lesson writers.

So far as the American Committee is concerned, it may be of interest to state that the General Committee, which meets annually, devotes not less than two full days of three sessions each to the consideration of topics to be selected. This is in addition to the work of the sub-committees, which are preparatory to that of the General Committee. The attendance of the General Committee at the annual meeting involves not less than 27,000 miles of travel. This gives some idea of the expenditure of time that is called for in preparation of the International Lesson scheme. It may be added that the Committee is appointed by the International Convention of Sunday School teachers, and is representative of the principal Denominations.

SYNOPSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS FROM 1874-1911.

*(Where only one subject is given, a year's study is indicated ;
where two appear, six months was given to each.)*

	SUBJECTS.			BOOKS.
1874	Life of Moses	...	...	Exod. and Deut.
	Life of Christ	...	...	Mark.
1875	Old Testament History—Joshua			
	to Saul	...	...	Josh. to Sam.
	Life of Christ	...	...	John.

	SUBJECTS.	BOOKS.
1876	Old Testament History—Saul to Solomon	Sam., Chron. & Provs.
	Studies in Acts of Apostles ...	Acts.
1877	The Divided Kingdom	1 and 2 Kings.
	Studies in Acts	Acts.
1878	From Rehoboam to Captivity... ..	Chron. to Dan.
	Life of Christ	Luke.
1879	Old Testament History—After the Return	Ezra and Prophets.
	Studies in Epistles	Epistles.
1880	Life of Christ	Matt.
	From Creation to Joseph ...	Gen.
1881	Life of Christ	Luke.
	Moses	Exod.
1882	Life of Christ	Mark.
1883	Studies in Acts	Acts.
	From Joshua to Samuel ...	Josh. to Sam.
1884	Life and Writings of Paul ...	Acts and Epistles.
	David and Solomon	Sam. and Kings.
1885	St. Paul	Acts and Epistles.
	Elijah and Elisha, &c....	Kings and Isa.
1886	The Captivity (one quarter) ...	Kings, Jer. and Dan.
	Life of Christ (three quarters)	John.
1887	The Creation to Exodus	Gen. and Exod.
	Life of Christ (last six months)	Matt.
1888	Life of Christ (first six months)	Matt.
	From Exodus to Samson ...	Exod. to Judges.
1889	Life of Christ	Mark.
	From Saul to Solomon ...	Samuel.
1890	Life of Christ	Luke.
1891	Old Testament History, from Division to Captivity	Kings and Chron.
	Life of Christ	John.
1892	Old Testament Lessons	Isa., Jer., Psa. & Dan.
	Acts of Apostles	Acts.
1893	Israel after Captivity—Job and Prophets	Ezra, Neh., Job & Eccl.

92 BIBLE TEACHING BY MODERN METHODS

	SUBJECTS.	BOOKS.
	1893 Life and Epistles of St. Paul ...	Acts and Epistles.
	1894 Old Testament History—Crea- tion to Exodus	Gen. and Exod.
	Life of Christ (last six months)	The Four Gospels.
	1895 Life of Christ (first six months)	The Four Gospels.
	1895 Jewish History—to David ...	Exod. to 1 Sam.
	1896 Life of Christ	Luke.
	Jewish History—David and Solomon	Sam. and Kings.
	1897 Studies in Acts and Epistles ...	Acts and Epistles.
	1898 Life of Christ	Matt.
	Jewish History—The Divided Kingdom	Kings and Chron.
	1899 Life of Christ	John.
	Jewish History—From the Exile	Dan., Ezek., Neh., &c.
	1900 Life of Christ—Harmony of Gospels	The Four Gospels.
	1901 Life of Christ (first six months)	The Four Gospels.
	The Patriarchs	Gen. to Exod.
	1902 Primitive Christian Church ...	Acts.
	Jewish History — Moses to Samuel	Exod., Deut., Judges.
	1903 Primitive Christian Church ...	Acts.
	Jewish History — Samuel to Solomon	Sam. to Kings.
	1904 Life of Christ	Synoptic Gospels.
	1905 Life of Christ	John.
	The Jewish Nation	Chron. to Malachi.
	1906 Words and Works of Jesus ...	Synoptic Gospels.
	1907 Patriarchs to Samuel	Gen., Exod., Josh., &c.
	1908 The Witness of John to Jesus... Saul to Solomon	John. 1 and 2 Sam.
Under discussion.	1909 The Expansion of the Early Church	Acts and Epistles.
	1910 Glory, Decline, and Restora- tion of Israel	Kings to Malachi.
	1911 The Gospel of the Kingdom ...	Matt.

The important part played by the International Lesson system in the life of Sunday Schools is evident from this rapid survey of the facts.

It has rescued them from a chaos of conflicting systems, and helped to create the solidarity which makes organised progress possible. Further, by uniting the scattered units, it has given the sense of common interests, emphasised the essential truths of the Gospel, and brought the rich stores of scholarship to every teacher's door. The very desire for teacher-training, more continuous Bible-study, and an improvement in the courses of study, are the fruits of the system's own growing.

Finally, it has educated the schools to understand and appreciate the need for still further development, and with the Lesson Committee alert, responsive, and wise, there is no reason why a system which for a generation has rendered such magnificent service to the Kingdom of Christ should not only continue to contribute this service, but also to extend its range and improve its efficiency. Evolution and not catastrophe is what is desirable.

FRANK JOHNSON.

II. DEFECTS AND SUGGESTED REMEDIES

It is pleasant, when we are compelled to criticise a scheme or an institution, to begin with points of agreement, and I therefore seek at the outset for points of contact between my own ideas and those which seem to underlie the International system of lessons. I share with those who are responsible for it a deep conviction as to the imperious claims of the children and the young people on the attention of the Church. I agree that in the training given to them an important place must be assigned to definite religious instruction. If I am right in the assumption that the very preparation of a scheme of lessons expresses the conviction that such training should be of a systematic and not a haphazard character, I hold that conviction even more strongly. I assent further to the position that a supreme place must be given to the Bible in this work. I heartily believe that the reading of the Bible may be one of the richest channels of spiritual nourishment and edification. The main motive that has prompted such criticisms of the present system as I have offered, has been my desire to win for the Bible a larger and worthier opportunity. My experience

of the effects of the International scheme has led me to ask where its defects lie and what can be suggested for them. In presenting to this Conference a summary of defects I labour under the disadvantage that several of its members are already familiar with what I have to say, since I have stated them in detail and have nothing to alter in deference to such criticisms as I have received, except possibly that one or two trivial details might be differently expressed.

It is, I am glad to believe, unnecessary to linger over the question of the uniform lesson. The principle that Juniors and Seniors should have special courses assigned to them has been conceded, so that its theoretical soundness at least may be now assumed. It is my conviction that we must go farther along this path, but that we have come so far is matter for thankfulness. I pass on, then, to the defects I find in the general scheme of lessons.

In the general mapping out of the scheme there are two salient defects. The first is that in the whole cycle there is no other type of lesson among the hundreds of which it consists than the lesson attached to a few verses of Scripture. It is not my point that non-Biblical subjects are ignored, but that subjects which ought to be included in the curriculum are passed by because they cannot be effectively treated in dependence on a fragment of that kind. The staple of such teaching as is to be desired would be Biblical, but it might sum-

marise many passages rather than emerge in mutilated form in connection with one, or it might present a bird's-eye view of a much larger section in such a way as to bring out its significance as no detailed study of detached fragments could do. I miss the presence of a larger imagination as to variety of method in teaching the Bible. It can surely not be the case that a literature like the Bible is to be taught only in one way. Let us hope that this relic of earlier methods may soon be discarded, and the syllabus be relieved of its dreary monotony. The second defect is that the extracts are chosen from too narrow a field. Large sections of Scripture are almost completely untouched, and among these some of the most important. Partly this is due to the uniform lesson. As it is, the lessons selected are often above the heads of the younger children, and this would be still more the case if the area of selection were widened in the direction indicated. This difficulty will disappear of itself with a proper grading of the lessons. I learn on the best authority that a biographical interest controls the choice of lessons. This has obvious merits, though the principle is rather imperfectly carried out. But there is much that cannot come under this head that ought to be brought in at some point in the course, the Upper Middle or the Senior being probably the best place for it.

Next we may notice the way in which the parts

selected are treated. Here again two salient defects are to be observed. The first is that there is often no continuity between the lessons, and thus instead of a series which leaves a connected impression we have a series of incoherent fragments that are often largely unintelligible because the antecedents of the narratives have been omitted. And what adds to the confusion is that often even the single incident is only partly told, the beginning or the end or perhaps both being omitted. This largely springs from another prevalent characteristic, the undue brevity of the lessons. They err occasionally, it is true, in the other direction, when the subject matter is unusually difficult. But generally the tendency is for them to be too brief. And no proportion seems to be observed between the length of a lesson and its simplicity. A further disastrous consequence follows from the cutting down of the lesson, that the amount of Scripture read is quite inadequate. Let us never forget that the success or failure of a lesson is to be judged by this test. Has the teacher contrived to lodge the passage in the pupil's memory? The exposition is quite secondary in importance to this, but the natural inference from the length of the selections would be very different.

A further and very important point is that the nature of Scripture itself as a revelation in history indicates for us the line on which Bible teaching should proceed. It must exhibit revelation as a

process in history if justice is to be done to the form in which it has pleased God to give it us. The choice of lessons should be informed throughout with the purpose of impressing on the pupils a sense of the intimate connection of the truth enshrined in Scripture with the experience through which the nation or the community or the individual was called to pass. The main stream of history in Israel gives us the key to many things in the Old Testament. Much of it seems to stand in a loose connection with religion. But its connection is really intimate, for many of the deepest things the prophets have to tell us lose half their significance and beauty when cut away from their historical root. Where so much has to be left out it is imperative that we should construct the syllabus so as to give a vivid impression of the movement of the history. This principle will lead to a large change in the method of selection. For the passages will not be chosen as isolated units to which a moral can be attached, but as parts of a connected whole designed to give an impressive view of God's self-revelation in the history of Israel. And we shall thus permit the Bible to do its own work and make its own appeal, an appeal which will not come with the force of a brief section behind it, but will grow with large impressiveness out of a whole series of narratives. A sense of God's action in history and the inflexible character of the moral laws that express His nature and His will, would not be the

least of the lessons that might be taught in this way.

I pass on to the suggestions for the improvement of the curriculum. I should have thought it unnecessary to refer explicitly to the limitations that we have to face were it not that I have positively been regarded as ignorant or forgetful of them. I am well aware that we have in a vast number of instances simply half an hour in the week to count on for the lesson, and that a Sunday School is not a theological college. If I neglected to call attention to such facts, I did so simply because it did not occur to me to labour the obvious, and, if I may say so, because I rashly assumed that I should be credited with some familiarity with the elements. The shortness of the time at our disposal is to my mind no argument for giving up as hopeless the attempt to introduce a more coherent scheme, it impresses me rather with the sense of its greater urgency. The time is so short, then let us get the very best we can out of it! And as to the theological college, I may simply say that I should not as a matter of fact draft a course for the Sunday School on the lines I follow in my college lectures.

Having swept these irrelevancies out of the way, I come first to the question of grading. We are, I believe, unanimous in the view that the Juniors and the Seniors should have courses distinct from the Intermediate section. But I feel clear in my own mind that this section should be

divided at least into two. As to the choice of subjects for the various departments I speak with diffidence as to the Juniors. I think the story must have the most prominent place, and I favour stories drawn from Genesis, selected with care, and from the Synoptic Gospels, not necessarily read by the children, but if it be thought desirable told to them or read to them. Many of the points on which I have to dwell in speaking of the higher parts of the school will have no application to the Juniors. I have given elsewhere my reasons for the view that the Lower Middle should take the history to the death of Elisha in the Old Testament and to the death of Stephen in the New. The Upper Middle should take the rest of the history, drawing on the prophets and the Epistles for historical and biographical material. Selections from Psalms and Proverbs and ethical teaching of the Epistles might be included.

The suggestions I should make for the Advanced Course are much more elaborate, so that I could not profitably attempt to detail them here. I pass on, therefore, to the question of the filling in. I am well aware that the difficulty becomes much more acute in the detailed construction of the syllabus than in the sketching of an outline. It is necessary, however, to shape the outline as the first stage and then to approach the filling in with a clear idea of the principles by which we must be guided. First, then, we must abolish as far as possible the

disconnected character of the lessons, and not leave stories half told. Omission is, of course, necessary, but it should be so skilfully carried out that the pupil shall not be conscious of such abrupt transitions as now make themselves very commonly felt. Moreover the omissions should spoil as little as possible the plan of any particular work that is being read. Probably in some cases it may be found necessary to substitute carefully prepared summaries, but the point at which these may be introduced must be determined with great care. When the style is at its best it would be disastrous to replace by a summary, but there are cases where this may be done without serious loss to the matter in hand. The difficulty will also be much diminished by lengthening the lessons, and thus securing that at each lesson a good deal more will be read.

It will be necessary, if the full benefit is to be deduced from the historical study, that such subsidiary aids as can be afforded by a simple list of dates, by some conception of the lie of the land, by references to Oriental customs, should be employed. I have spoken emphatically elsewhere on the necessity of keeping these things in strict subordination to the main aim, geography, archæology, chronology are to be introduced only as they light up the essential meaning of the Bible. Even the knowledge of the history is vital only because it is indispensable to the true understanding of the religion. The subsidiary studies that I have named

ought, however, to have room made for them in the curriculum. At present any systematic treatment is crowded out because the lesson for the day has to be read and expounded. Hence the pupils go through their course without any adequate conception of events in their relation to each other and to the whole, because they have no firmly fixed outline in which they can fix the relative position of events. And similarly the history would be much illuminated if, in addition to such geographical information as might be given bit by bit on individual lessons, some time were definitely set apart for imparting an elementary knowledge of the geography of Palestine. Outlines of history should, I think, also be introduced. Here again I am thinking of nothing elaborate, but something sufficient to help the pupil to see the bearings on and place in the general movement of the section he is studying.

I urge further the importance of setting apart some time for instruction in Christian doctrine. It is desirable that the pupils should know at least in an elementary way what their religion is. At present they may pick up scraps of doctrine from the lessons they are taught, but they do not learn them in their true relations or see them as parts of a great organism of truth, or apprehend their due proportion and emphasis. Moreover, since they are learnt only in this accidental way, we have no guarantee that all of them will be learnt, not even some of the most vital. That at some point in the course

we should find a place for apologetics seems to me necessary. But any full treatment of this should be left over to the Advanced Course.

And here I should treat the various questions as they arise in connection with the study of the Bible so far as this can be done. Thus the whole question of miracles and the credibility of the Gospel history, should spring directly out of the discussion of the life of Christ. But it is a more perplexing problem how far in the Upper Middle any treatment of this can be introduced. I am anxious that those who leave the school before they pass into the Institute at all should not be at the mercy of the first plausible sceptic he meets in factory, shop, or office. Our opponents are leaving no stone unturned to undermine belief in the Gospel. Are we to sit still and do nothing? We are paying heavily already the penalty of neglect. I have no doubt that the true policy is, as far as possible, to teach so that the objections are felt to be irrelevant when they come. But this leaves much of the position still undefended, and I heartily wish that some attention could be given to providing answers that will be sufficient for the immediate purpose.

I will not touch in detail on the Golden Texts, further than to repeat my very strong opinion that these should be cut away entirely from the lessons and chosen entirely for their own sake, and carefully graded in length and arranged in consecutive order.

I know well that we have a multitude of incom-

petent teachers. Much of what I should include in a curriculum, they would probably teach as well as they teach the present course. Other things they would find more difficult. Naturally the provision of an improved curriculum implies the provision of adequate helps. If a teacher is positively incompetent to teach some things that we want, we must make the best of the situation, but not cut down the standard in the case of those who with such help as we can render will be quite equal to the demand. Pessimism is the deadly sin for those who are servants in the Kingdom of God. We have to plan for the future, and not heed too much the lions in the way. I am familiar with the whole menagerie, but what are we set to guide the Churches for, if not to lead forlorn hopes and attempt great things for God? That He will fail us if we attempt the apparently hopeless task to which He calls us is not for one moment to be entertained. The Christianity of England a quarter of a century hence depends for its richness, its depth, its knowledge, and its power largely on the quality of the teaching in the Sunday Schools now and for the next few years. And it is to the Sunday School leaders that God has given the opportunity of deciding so great an issue.

A S. PEAKE.

III. THE PROBLEM OF LESSON- SELECTION

In considering, not without anxiety, in what manner I could most fittingly fulfil the task allotted to me in connection with this Conference, I have been led to think that it would best accord with the object of its promoters, and harmonise more closely with the deliberative character of the proceedings, entirely to lay aside the controversial attitude. Indeed, a somewhat lengthened acquaintance with Sunday School lesson-systems, and the labour of compiling not a few, have entirely disqualified me from looking upon any or all of these, with unqualified complacency.

“Our little systems have their day”—

and lesson-systems are no exception to the rule; only, before they “cease to be,” we need to satisfy ourselves that their successors give promise of an ampler fruitage, attaining to “something nobler than before.”

I venture, therefore, instead of attempting to expound the strong points, or extenuate the weak ones, of the “Uniform” or “International” system, to submit to this Conference, from a purely

practical standpoint, what I deem the chief conditions of the problem which we have to face, and to suggest a few inquiries arising therefrom. It will then be for minds of wider outlook and richer furniture to determine the direction in which a solution may be sought for.

These conditions, then, appear to arrange themselves under *four* principal heads, viz., the *Scholar* ; the *Home* ; the *School* ; and the *Teacher*.

1. THE SCHOLAR.

Let us realise, as a first condition, that we have to deal with, say, a million and a half¹ of children and young persons, of ages varying from 5 (or under) to 20 and upwards. A rough classification divides them into four sections. *Primary*, from infancy to 8 or 9 years old ; *Lower Intermediate*, 9 to 12 ; *Higher Intermediate*, 12 to 15 ; and *Senior*, above 15 years of age.

An increasing number of primary scholars, and a considerable proportion of seniors, are now provided with distinctive courses of lesson-subjects—the latter usually from private sources ; but at present this re-arrangement is by no means general, and probably a majority of both these sections study the lesson allotted to the rest of the school.

¹ This is intentionally *under-stated*. The *home* constituency of the Sunday School Union comprises nearly *a million and three-quarters*.

Considering these divisions *separately*, it must be noted that the widest diversities prevail among scholars *of the same age* and status; while yet the conditions seem to render an age-classification almost unavoidable.

They differ *socially*: varying from the higher middle class to the lower ranks of the proletariat. In neighbouring Sunday Schools we may find, on the one hand, young people who enjoy the comforts and luxuries of a well-ordered home, with educational and other advantages above the average; and, on the other, children who are no strangers to poverty and its vicissitudes, and who, after struggling through the requirements of an elementary school, are compelled to undertake the toil of bread-winning, with the "gyves" of illiteracy and social inferiority "upon their wrists." And even in a single school considerable disparity is always observable.

They differ *intellectually*: in original capacity, in mental activities, and in scholastic attainments. At one extreme (to borrow the metaphor of the old Greek teacher) you have the steed that needs a strong curb; at the other the dull horse that requires the spur; and many shades of difference between. They differ in power to *attend*, to *acquire*, to *retain*, to *reproduce*; and each group of pupils forms an educational microcosm.

They differ *morally*: in temperament, in attitude, in tendencies. The boy or girl of strong passions

and little self-control sits side by side with a scholar of cold and unemotional nature; the earnest, aspiring lad beside one of low and sordid aims; the innocent girl "in whom is no guile," has for fellow pupil one who has consciously put forth her hand to the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

They differ *religiously*. Widely—very widely in religious *knowledge*; in their *outward habits* in respect of religious ordinances; in their *inward attitude* towards *revealed truth*; in their spiritual sympathies, and in their *personal relations* to Christ and the Gospel. These diversities disclose themselves only to the teacher who knows his pupils and has won their confidence; and even from him many secrets of the inner life are often concealed.

2. THE HOME.

It is needless to point out that many, probably most, of these diversities among Sunday scholars are traceable to the homes from which they come—to parentage, to domestic companionship, to the moral and intellectual standard of the family group, and above all to the moral and religious *atmosphere* of the home. In the case of some favoured children, "Heaven lies about" them "in their infancy"; in others the religious element is tacitly excluded from the family life. In some the ghastly skeleton of moral corruption discloses itself, and overshadows the domestic hearth; in others, again, an empty formalism usurps the place of vital

Christianity, or else religion exists only in a type gloomy, narrow, and repulsive to the mind of the child.

Other conditions of the problem before us are to be found in—

3. THE SCHOOL.

By this, of course, is meant the typical organisation of an ordinary Sunday School, without touching on exceptional cases. Passing over such material limitations and difficulties as are too often caused by unsuitable accommodation—over-crowded, dark, or ill-ventilated rooms, and the like—there remain *two* features which strike the observer as peculiar and suggestive. The *first* is, that the *attendance* of the pupils is to a large extent *voluntary*—the Institution possessing no means of enforcing it; the *second*, that the religious instruction which forms the essential characteristic of the Sunday School is imparted only on *one day in each week*. Each of these features might supply food for profitable meditation to the educationalist—or indeed to any Christian mind and heart in which the best interests of children and youth have a place. To speak with more precision—we may say, that the time allotted for religious teaching in Sunday Schools is, for *two-thirds* of the scholars, *from thirty to forty minutes per week*; and for the remainder, not more than a *single hour*.

Between every two such brief periods of instruc-

tion, therefore, there is an interval of *six days*—days filled, more or less closely, with multitudinous occupations—“at work, at school, at play.” And yet further—the varied and increasing facilities afforded for Sabbath desecration and week-end trips in summer, with the inevitable proportion of inclement Sundays and occasions of personal or relative illness, and other incidental causes of irregularity, of necessity cause not infrequent breaks in the already attenuated curriculum. Such default amounts on an average to about 15 to 25 per cent. of the total number of scholars on the books.

We have, lastly, to glance at the conditions of the problem as they affect

4. THE TEACHER.

It is matter for unqualified rejoicing that the last few years have witnessed a remarkable and still increasing desire on the part of Sunday School teachers, throughout our land, to obtain a fuller equipment for their work; so that it becomes no small difficulty to make fitting or adequate response to the applications which this desire is calling forth. I need only refer, in passing, to the widespread and growing interest awakened by the lecture Conferences held by my friend Mr. G. H. Archibald. But as yet undoubtedly wide diversities exist, and add to the complexity of the problem before us. Of course this is not

peculiar to *one* class of teachers—even of *religious* teachers; nor is it likely that it can ever be more than partially diminished. Our teachers differ widely, not only in social position and what may conveniently be included under the head of “general culture,” but also in religious knowledge, in capacity to acquire in vigour and clearness of thought, in aptness to communicate, and power to guide and control; and, beside all inevitable diversities of temperament, tone, and manner, they differ in the chief element of power—instrumentally regarded—which we call their *personality*, moral and spiritual.

In thus laying before this Conference a few of the conditions of the problem which it is called to deal with, I have dwelt somewhat fully on the great diversity observable among those, both teachers and scholars, for whom various courses of Biblical and theological study are provided. And I venture to justify this presentment by two considerations: first, that most of these differences are permanent, and while improved methods may in time diminish, they cannot be expected to obliterate them. And secondly, because, while they are obvious enough to any one who cares to search for them, they seem to need exhibiting in bold relief, in detail, and in their entirety, before any satisfactory legislation can be proceeded with.

The Rev. E. L. Drawbridge, in his interesting booklet, “The Training of the Twig,” acutely

observes: "The pace of a [Sunday School] class, like that of a fleet, is equal to that of its slowest unit. The rate at which the class, as a whole, can be taught, is no greater than the rate at which the slowest member of it can learn." What is true of the single class is true of the entire school; and with regard to the provision of courses of lessons for instruction, the same rule applies to the entire Sunday School area.

Bearing these facts in mind, the problem stands thus: Given a constituency so vast and diversified, alike among teachers and taught—to find the best practicable course of religious instruction for children and youth.

My colleague, Mr. Johnson, has laid before you the history of a Lesson-System, which for half a century and more has had a larger number of supporters than any other, before or contemporary with it, and which has awakened an interest almost world-wide. It rests on the simple *principle* of one lesson-subject for all grades in the school, except the senior, this exception being rather implied than expressed. Its leading *method*, especially since it became International, has been to provide as topics of instruction all those portions of the Old and New Testaments, chiefly narrative, which appear suited for tuition in an ordinary Sunday School. "Uniformity," however, can no longer be affirmed of the system. As far back as the year 1894, both the American and English Lessons Committees

recommended and prepared a separate course of simple subjects for the teaching of Primary or Infant classes; although in this country the publication of a Primary list was withheld, owing to the absence of any demand for such specific provision for the little ones. More recently, the English Committee has recommended the adoption, at least for the present, of the American "Beginners' Course."

It has been tacitly assumed, rather than enunciated, that in the case of the Senior Division teachers were at liberty to select or compile such courses of lesson-subjects as seemed best suited to their pupils. Indeed the marked difference in the tastes and capacities of the youths and maidens, or the young men and young women, attending such classes, rendered it impossible to cater satisfactorily for all.

Even with these limitations the Uniform system has been assailed in America by rival editors and publishers, and (on quite different grounds) by a few educationalists and academic teachers; while in England both the principle itself and the mode of carrying it into practice in the annual lists of International Lessons have evoked much severe, though kindly and sympathetic criticism. Thus far, the large majority of schools connected with the Sunday School Union are more or less loyal to the system (and the "International" sentiment is a factor not to be overlooked); yet symptoms of secession are not wanting.

In Scotland the dominant method is on similar lines to our own, the *same* lesson being graded for Elementary, Junior and Senior divisions. But the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of England passed a resolution under date of June 7, 1905, expressing their opinion that the time had come for providing graded *subjects*, differing according to the ages and attainments of the scholars.

My friends, Professors Adeney and Peake, desire reforms in the direction of more strictly consecutive and systematic study; while the Rev. A. F. Mitchell would give the widest freedom of selection to the compilers of schemes of lessons.

In the hope of reaching some common ground of agreement I would venture to propose a few questions which the afore-mentioned conditions of the problem seem to suggest.

1. Does not the rule enunciated by Mr. Mitchell in his interesting work, "How to Teach the Bible," viz., that every scheme of lesson-subjects should be prepared "*from the standpoint of the pupil*," and not from that of the teacher, supply the basal principle which many have been trying to discover? Miss Zimmern, speaking of the marvellous freshness, simplicity, and naturalness of the "Tales for Children" of Maria Edgeworth, remarks that their "chief charm" consisted in the fact that "she not only wrote in the language of children, but *from the child's point of view*."

2. Would not lessons arranged on such a principle involve the subordination of *consecutiveness* and *system* to the higher principle of *adaptation*?

3. Is *consecutiveness* of apprehension on the scholar's part possible, in any proper sense of the term, for courses of Bible history when the lessons are given at intervals of a whole week? Would any sense of consecutiveness or cohesion remain in the mind of an average boy or girl, at the end of a course of twenty-six or fifty-two lessons, so given?

4. Does a "system" of lessons, carried over five or six years, at the rate of one per Sunday, exist "systematically" anywhere but on paper?

5. Should a course of lessons, of whatever length, proceed upon an *historic* or a *doctrinal* basis? If the *former*, must not the theological teaching be *unsystematic*? and if the *latter*, must not the Scripture readings be *unconsecutive*?

6. Considering that, as we have seen, "the pace of a class or school is that of its dullest pupil," should not lessons selected from the scholar's standpoint possess *simplicity* as their leading characteristic? Dr. Horton recently remarked, at an educational gathering, "In teaching children religion, we must teach them the things that can be taken in. What was required was the intelligent teaching of the intelligible."

7. Accepting this dictum, which can hardly be

disputed, would it not be worth consideration whether its practical adoption in preparing lesson-schemes would not involve the elimination of many Scripture *narratives* (to go no further) which it has been the custom to include without a moment's hesitation? Can all the incidents in the life and ministry of our Divine Master be taught from the standpoint of the average boy and girl of to-day—of their mental outlook and moral and spiritual sympathies? And lastly—

8. With forty minutes per week at our disposal, with a shifting population, and irregular attendance; with the work of life claiming so many even in early youth; with crying social evils all around; with multiplied temptations to godlessness and vice, to gambling and intemperance, to lying and dishonesty, to lapses from integrity in the warehouse and the shop, and from purity of speech and act in social life—is it, or is it not, worth asking whether a *short* double course of lessons for Higher and Lower Intermediate, on the fundamental truths of our faith, and the duties associated therewith—the gospel of our salvation and the life of discipleship—repeated, if necessary, every year, or every two years at most—would not more directly and more effectively meet the moral and spiritual needs of boys and girls from eight to fifteen, as we have them in our Sunday Schools, than more ambitious attempts to compass the whole course of sacred history, or the entire circle of theological doctrine?

9. And, for the requirements and capabilities of our youths and maidens of fifteen years and upwards, could not three or four Advanced Courses, such as those advocated at this Conference, but of different degrees of advancement, be prepared and placed at the service of teachers and leaders of "Senior," "Guild," and "Institute" classes, by whatever name they may be designated, for selection according to the capacities and attainments of their pupils?

Would not such a differentiating of educational pabulum be more likely to preserve our Intermediate and Junior scholars from that mental dyspepsia which too often has resulted from the premature administration of unduly "strong meat"?

I would close with an Eastern apologue. In a certain city a plague was raging. A great doctor came from afar, and brought an elixir which was a certain specific for the malady. The local physicians approved and accepted the remedy, but instead of dispensing it to their patients, they fell to disputing about the shape of the bottles in which the elixir should be stored. *And while they debated, the people died.*

W. H. GROSER.

THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE AND EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

THE Christian Church is at present in great need of broadly cultured men to deal with the problem of religious education. Our ideas on the subject are so varied as to be almost chaotic. In Germany the religious instruction in Protestant schools, though very elaborate, has proved ineffective in quickening the spiritual life of the nation; in Britain the present condition is transitional; while in the New World the complete secularisation of schools is causing grave concern to those whose chief interest lies in the moral welfare of the people.

What of the future? At present it is impossible to distinguish any clear and consistent guidance in the multitude of voices, but two convictions are coming out in unmistakable tones—first, that religious character must be instilled by a living faith embodied in a teacher who can win the respect of the child; and, second, that the Church,

as the highest educational factor in the building of the character of the people, must be intensely interested in the school problem. Never again will the official management of the day-school be handed over to the Church as an organisation, but the real power of moral and spiritual direction should never depart unless she fail to commend her gospel to the intellectual leaders of Christendom.

I believe that the theological colleges of the Churches have it in their power to do more for the religious education of the Christian world than any other institution, because they send forth a steady stream of highly trained men, who may become sympathetic and competent observers of present needs, and whose opinion, if well founded, has great weight. Further, the minister not only moulds the thoughts of the Church, but influences the home, which is an immense educational power. By arousing the parents to a sense of the overwhelming importance of religious training in the home through life and precept, he is setting in motion most potent forces for the building of character. Then, in fulfilment of his function as a teacher, the minister must direct the education of his teachers in the Sunday School, and have oversight of its work.

In view of this, it is reasonable to look to our theological colleges for guidance on a question which to-day pre-eminently requires judicial and well-informed treatment. Is all the present con-

troversy about religious education in the day-school mere irrational clamour? If something real lies behind it, we must prove to the world that our interest in the young is of a competent character, and justify our right to be heard by training men who have opinions worth listening to, instead of allowing the Church to be represented by those who fill our ears with lamentations because they cannot get what is educationally impossible. Let us be in earnest and win the respect of educationalists, who are learning to agree upon the best training on the secular side. We shall always be gladly listened to if we understand the meaning of religious education, which, unhappily, too often we do not.

2. WHAT THE COLLEGES MAY DO.

It is a common opinion that the theological colleges are strongholds of conservatism. We are sometimes told by those who profess to regard our welfare rather than our feelings, that the forces of the other professions are marching forward well equipped to possess the twentieth century in the name of truth, but the theologians, once doughty warriors, abide in their tents where they were pitched generations ago. Whether this be true or not, we may get a modicum of comfort from the fact that reformers are for ever scrutinising the curricula of the schools, the universities, and the professional colleges. As a rule, it is in the name

of the practical and common-sense. And revision may be helpful, perhaps nowhere more so than in the theological college. When the criticism is directed towards the removal of the unpractical, it must always be heeded, for the average college is not intended to produce specialists in any branch of theological discipline, but to train men who will be preachers, teachers, and pastors for all sorts and conditions throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Too often the breath of the workaday world hardly stirs the quiet academic retreats, while the Church outside is shaken by blast upon blast. The privilege of the clergy is being withdrawn and the pew is not docile. The people are questioning the value of the Church as an organisation, and demand provision for their deep-felt wants, or they will turn elsewhere for food. Manifestly the theological college is challenged to produce the type of man who will be keenly alive to the needs of his situation, but it is no easy matter to provide spiritual directors for a nation. Assuredly every failure is not to be laid to the account of an antiquated curriculum. The most ideal college cannot turn a dead stick into a living tree whose leaf will not wither and which bringeth forth fruit in its season. Nor does the solution lie by any means wholly in a larger infusion of the "practical." Our aim is to produce men whose discipline will have made them practical. Now,

what is this discipline? From one point of view a theological college should be an integral part of the university system. Religion—in particular the Christian religion—is objectively studied in its theoretical bases and historical manifestations, under the intellectual ideals that prevail in the arts class-rooms. For the most part such methods are an unadulterated blessing, because the principles of literary interpretation, historical discipline, and the philosophic temper, when applied to religious thought and experience, tend to intellectual honesty and self-criticism, which are essential in a minister who is to guide the religious life of the modern world.

But, also, the theological college is a professional school to train students for the work of the ministry. No mere scholar with his exclusive academic distinction, will reach the heart of the people. That secret is with the wise man who can turn his learning to the advantage of the average person. A system of theological training is inefficient if it does not help the student to grasp the fundamental necessity of knowing men.

(a) CHANGE OF EMPHASIS.

There is need of readjustment in the relation of the theoretical and the humanistic sides of the theological curriculum, so that the latter may not stand so constantly in the shade. Three elements enter into the full function of the modern minister

—prophecy, teaching, and pastoral oversight. Of the first two, prophecy is more occasional, teaching more constant. Special knowledge of moral or spiritual conditions may from time to time kindle prophecy in the preacher, but the class-room ordinarily will neither create nor perhaps sustain the prophet. He is the inspired man. On the other hand, the conditions of the modern pulpit compel the minister to expect his most enduring results from his *charisma* of teaching. It will remain a moot question whether the pulpit or the pastoral function is the more important; in fact, it is impossible to evaluate them severally; but too great emphasis cannot be laid upon the fact that the minister is a physician of souls, and must thoroughly understand the nature of those whom he is to succour. He will require, of course, to know personally those who are committed to his care, but this empirical knowledge is not fully effective (just as it holds true of the physician of the body) unless it is based upon a knowledge of the growth and characteristics of the religious consciousness. This aspect of knowledge has recently received much attention, and of necessity will be emphasised more fully in the training for the ministry.

(b) READJUSTMENTS IN THE CURRICULUM.

The only satisfactory method of impressing upon students the immense importance of religious

education, in order that they may go forth imbued with the conviction that educational leadership is incumbent upon them is to prescribe the study of the psychology of religion, especially of the child, and the principles of teaching. I have said the psychology of the child because it is difficult for the mature mind to think itself back over the process through which it has reached its present development, and because the subtle religious and moral phases which become permanent in character occur before manhood. Our Master-Teacher has said that the law of the Kingdom is first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear—the process following the divine law of the seasons. Likewise, in the coming of the Kingdom in the individual life there are divine laws, and it is bad spiritual husbandry to be ignorant of the seasons for planting, the times and methods of culture, and to try to reverse the constitution according to which God has ordered that our characters must grow. The soil may be good enough, but if it is tilled on unnatural principles the harvest will be small.

Unfortunately our methods of religious education are too often hopelessly unscientific. We profess to believe that conversion is entirely a supernatural fact, but we throw obstacles in the way of the Spirit's working by neglecting to observe patiently the divine laws of human nature. The minister who understands child nature will

not endeavour to deal with every age in exactly the same way. The simplicity of childhood, won by grace and virtue in the concrete, and the storm and stress of adolescence, in which doubts and fears and ideals are conflicting for permanent mastery, are not to be influenced by the same presentation of truth. Let us avoid blundering empiricism as far as in us lies. Even with all our acquired skill we shall have enough errors to lament.

Along with psychology there will naturally be found in a theological course training in pedagogical method. The best teachers are born, but the average person may be wonderfully improved by sound instruction and practice. No one can secure the continuous attention of children unless he has either consciously or by intuition mastered the fundamental laws of teaching. And this once done is a permanent and invaluable possession. The student who has learned to handle a class of children, and to instil into their hearts a suitable lesson, has been set far forward on his way towards interesting and moving the mature mind; for he can strip the truth bare and reclothe it skilfully as an intelligible friend for every age. Even for the preacher ability to adapt his message to the children is supremely valuable. Here in truth a little child shall lead them.

A further improvement might be made in methods of presenting Scripture. The Bible is

taught to-day in our colleges with a discernment never hitherto equalled, and the delicate but necessary process of sifting the essential from the non-essential in the expression of our faith is being wrought out with great knowledge under the leadership of devout and sober men. But the very success with which these studies have been prosecuted has facilitated an improvement in adapting the messages of Scripture to the comprehension of children. The historical method of interpretation has revealed the rich variety of the Bible and its wealth as a storehouse of human experience, from which every phase of human life may be illustrated. Yet the divers portions in their divers manners are found to blend wonderfully into consistent truth concerning God and man. In our colleges the Bible is studied almost entirely from the technical point of view, minute attention being paid to textual problems, the literary structure of the books, the detailed exegesis of selected portions, and the history of interpretation. All this is admittedly valuable, but it should be supplemented by courses dealing with the scope of the Bible as a whole, in which the purpose of the books, their contents and teaching, would be emphasised. This would be a serviceable means for training students to adapt Bible truth to the young, and generally for popular interpretation. The Bible will not retain its hold upon the people unless the colleges produce interpreters with insight and adaptive gifts.

The time at my disposal has not allowed me to gather statistics from any colleges, but in many institutions both in Canada and in the United States the curriculum of theological study has been modified to provide for religious pedagogy. Where associated universities have instruction in education, attendance on it may be made compulsory by the theological colleges, or the proof of normal training and of actual teaching in the public schools of the country may be accepted as an equivalent. It is not improbable that before long the psychology of the child and education will be recognised as equally essential with philosophy or social science for entrance upon the study of theology. In this direction the hope of the future seems to lie, for the problems of religious education will not approach solution until the Churches are led by a ministry upon whom its burden rests heavily, and who are able to distinguish between the essential and the non-essential, the possible and the impossible.

(c) CLOSER RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNIVERSITIES AND THE NORMAL SCHOOLS.

One would also hope that among the larger and the better endowed colleges special courses for lay workers may be offered, as, for example, is the case already in Union Seminary, New York, and the Hartford Theological Seminary. Possibly in the future a new teaching order in the ministry

may arise, whose duty it will be to undertake daily religious work among the children of the city schools, their speciality being as fully recognised as that of a teacher of language or science, though their support would be undertaken by the co-operation of the Protestant Churches. At present a more practical course would be to get Biblical literature recognised as optional in the arts classes of the universities and in the normal colleges of the State. The present methods of Bible study make affiliation with non-denominational universities and theological colleges quite feasible. Were the theological colleges to offer attractive lectures, free from the technicalities of introduction and exegesis, they would be attended by a large number of those looking forward to the teaching profession, whose influence, direct or indirect, would help to solve the question of religious education. At the same time, such courses would materially benefit the average theological student.

(d) EXTENSION WORK.

One other development may be mentioned which has been tested, and which may be of service for a time in some localities. I refer to Extension lectures on the principles of teaching and Biblical study delivered by members of the faculty in well-selected centres. They will arouse interest in the Sunday School and direct the attention of the Churches to its importance. Here again simplicity,

concreteness, and human interest are indispensable to success, but the very effort to adapt the results of scholarship to popular understanding will react most beneficially upon the more advanced study in the class-room. The popularisation of knowledge is an effective means of readjusting values.

It is a matter of profound regret that the indifference of theological schools to the claims of the young on the minister, except for some perfunctory reference in "practical theology," has diverted the attention of many students from this vitally important department of church life. On this account the advances that have been made in organised Sunday School work are due to the zeal of worthy laymen and sympathetically disposed ministers in non-denominational societies. However excellent and deserving of the Churches' thanks such work undoubtedly is, no Church can afford to transfer the educational leadership of its youth to others, and the theological colleges hold the key to the situation.

R. A. FALCONER.

THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

I AM very thankful for the opportunity of saying something to my brethren in England regarding the relations of the theological college to the Sunday School. Naturally, this must be said in the light of experience in America; and I am aware, of course, of the danger which there is lest recommendations from one country to another should be at the very outset treated with generally unconscious hostility. It is by no sense with a feeling that any superiority attaches to the Christian work of that country that I shall attempt to describe our experience in the matter before us. There is much which the larger theological institutions of America have yet to learn from the smaller colleges of the old country. A larger and more generous programme does not always mean more thorough work and better training for the ministry. But now to the facts of the case.

First. Within the last ten years there has been a very widespread interest aroused in what is popularly known as Bible Study. This has been quickened by the enormous growth of Young Men's Christian Associations, and by the vogue won for itself by the summer assembly type of school, which is often described as a Chautauqua. As these institutions have disseminated the feeling that the Bible ought to be more widely and more intelligently studied by private individuals, the Churches have been aroused to ask whether it is not their function to provide for this loud and ever louder demand.

Second. The Sunday School movement in this country has, especially under the inspiration and direction of the International Sunday School Association, resulted in a very large increase in the number of Sunday School scholars. Many Churches in northern cities count the number of their scholars by several hundreds. This development in mere numbers has made necessary the more thorough organisation of the work, and has at last brought a large number of Churches to the point at which they feel bound to pay their superintendents, and sometimes also to pay the head of one or other of the departments in the Sunday School. In my own correspondence I receive every year an increasing number of applications from ministers of various denominations, and in various parts of the country, asking me to

name persons who are fitted to do pastoral work and to superintend the Sunday School, giving the bulk of their time to the latter form of ministry. The number of such appointments is, then, increasing year by year, and those who make them demand that candidates shall either have proved their capacity in years of such service, or that they shall come certificated from a school where they had special preparation for it.

Third. Again we must take account of the fact that the conscience of the Church is being roused as it realises increasingly the significance of the complete separation between Church and State, which in so large a measure extends throughout the country, even to the public school. If in many schools the custom still survives of daily reading a portion of Scripture and offering prayer, that religious exercise is not intended to partake of the nature of instruction; and there remain very few public schools anywhere in America which allow real religious instruction to be given. If the Church is to do this work, it is evident that those whom it appoints as teachers must not be unworthy of comparison with the trained secular teachers in the public schools. Every one recognises that if the teachers of the Bible and of Christian truth are on the whole inferior to the day-school teachers, that will tend to awaken contempt for religion in the minds of the children. There is spreading through the land a loud outcry,

therefore, for a higher grade of Sunday School work. This cry is uttered not merely or even mainly by those who lay more stress on the intellectual than the spiritual elements in religious instruction. It is made in the very name of spirituality by those who recognise the facts stated above. It is not that the schools are intended to aim less at the awakening of faith and the stimulating of devotion, but that this end cannot be achieved if the degree of intelligence possessed by the teacher and the skill exercised by him are not of a high quality.

Fourth. The influence of the preceding facts has resulted in the creation of several institutions in different parts of the country which aim explicitly at training men and women for Christian work other than that of the ministry, and more especially for Sunday School work. This is done by the Bible Training School in Chicago, by Dr. W. W. White's school in New York City, and I see that just this season a similar school has been opened in Boston. But the most interesting, and I am fain to believe the most significant, of these schools is that which has been in Hartford for some years, and which is known as the Hartford School of Religious Pedagogy. This began as a school for Christian workers in the city of Springfield, Massachusetts, and then was known for several years as the Bible Normal School before it assumed its present somewhat uncouth name.

Its body of teachers has comprised several men who are recognised authorities on their own special lines, who have had the offers of attractive appointments elsewhere, but who have given themselves, even at great self-sacrifice, to this task from the conviction that in this way they can best serve their country and the Kingdom of God. The permanent instructors include a professor of New Testament, assisted by a competent teacher in the Old Testament, a professor of Psychology, who is one of the leading investigators in America into child psychology, and a professor of Pedagogy and Sunday School Organisation. As I am sending with this article some copies of the calendar of this school, I need not enter into particulars ; but the following general statements it may be well to make here:—

The school aims at doing something more than merely the superficial work of popular instruction, whether in the Scriptures or in the methods of Sunday School teaching. The students are brought down to scientific method, are taught to investigate the history of the Sunday School and to study the varieties of organisation in the different Churches. They are also made to feel the significance and importance of their function as teachers by lectures in the history of teaching and instruction in the fundamental principles of education as such. The courses in psychology include instruction in the outlines of general psychology

and a most thorough discussion of the phenomena connected with the growth of the mind through childhood and youth into maturity. Deductions are, of course, drawn or suggestions made as to the best manner of adapting the material given in Scripture to the various stages which are thus disclosed in the development of the individual. That this work is appreciated, that the need for it is very great, may be proved by such facts as these: That the teachers of this school are in great demand for lectures and addresses in various parts of the country wherever religious education is being discussed; that the number and quality of the students are improving every year. We have in residence this year nearly fifty young men and women—the young men being comparatively scarce—who have devoted themselves to the religious education of the young. Many of these are persons not only of sincere piety, but of high intelligence. Some are graduates of the best known colleges, and the large majority are looking forward especially to service in the Sunday School field. And yet we are not able to supply all the workers for whom ministers and Churches make application to this institution year by year.

Fifth. The theological college, or seminary as it is called in this country, is also awaking to the needs of the hour in the matter especially of Sunday School education. Some of the older seminaries keep themselves aloof from actual

participation in the work, but even they have been compelled to put into their courses of instruction the subject of Sunday School work and the relations of the pastor thereto. In most seminaries a considerable amount of time is given to this subject. To some extent this movement has been stimulated by the fact that where these seminaries have existed in large cities the professors have found themselves drawn into active Sunday School work, and have, in some instances, occupied the position of superintendent of Sunday Schools for many years, and with great success. In other cases they have taught Bible-classes in connection with their own Churches. In still other cases they have been led by the pressure of the Churches around the seminary to offer evening courses of lectures to the Sunday School teachers; and in some cases have formed large and influential classes of this kind.

One of the most significant of all these labours was that carried on by the late President W. R. Harper, of the University of Chicago, along with Professors E. D. Burton and Shailer Mathews, the well-known New Testament scholars. President Harper assumed the superintendentship of a Sunday School near the University, and, with the assistance of the two whom I have named and others, organised the Sunday School on a unique plan, and for years saw the work being done by such able coadjutors as these with great

zeal and success. Out of their experience there has grown a remarkable series of books published by the Press of the University of Chicago, providing studies in Scripture and various aspects of the Sunday School and its work.

Several of the theological seminaries—notably Union Seminary, New York, and the Chicago Theological Seminary, with which I was formerly connected—have found it necessary to establish adjunct schools or institutes for the purpose of training Sunday School teachers. This has been done at considerable cost, because they see how great is the field, and how real is their duty in the matter. Each of these seminaries is reaching every year a larger constituency, but the largest service of this kind is being rendered by Union Seminary, New York, where many thousands of Sunday School teachers are formed every year into classes, where a large amount of literature is printed and circulated among the schools, and where continually the work rises in quality as well as extends numerically.

Hartford Theological Seminary some years ago—mainly because several of its professors were teaching in Sunday Schools, and were led to very practical views of the situation—gave a large place to the interests of Sunday School work in its regular curriculum. Finding that it was not easy for already burdened teachers to add this to their labours, the seminary invited the school

which I have already described to remove from Springfield to Hartford, on the understanding that the two should work together. They are distinct institutions, but their co-operation is both real and fruitful for each. A large number of the seminary students every year elect courses in the School of Religious Pedagogy, and are thus better equipped for taking charge of Churches where the Sunday School opportunity is large.

In conclusion, I may be permitted to say that it seems to me to be in the highest degree desirable that all theological colleges or seminaries should recognise the wonderful change through which the Church is passing, partly through the separation of Church and State, partly through the spread of popular education, partly through the increased appetite on the part of Christian people for a knowledge of the Bible and understanding of Christian truth. This undoubtedly means the multiplication of the educational functions of the Church. Men trained for the regular ministry are only in rare cases possessed of such original genius as to see the significance of the situation, and in still fewer cases able to take hold of it successfully. Moreover, the work is becoming so much differentiated, it demands so much new organisation adapted to its own ends, that a new class of teachers, as well as a new grade of teaching must be created. It would be surely a disaster to the college itself to keep its students back

from contact with this larger view and personal acquaintance with the principles that are involved. On the other hand, if the colleges will lead in the matter, our experience in this country is that the Churches will be more quickly aroused to the situation, and the colleges thus will be brought into new and more varied and fruitful relations with the Churches. If there is not much enthusiasm at present anywhere for ministerial education in itself, there is much real enthusiasm for general religious education, and especially for Sunday School work. The colleges which can put themselves in living connection with that enthusiasm whose tide is rising so grandly year by year, will attract some of the enthusiasm for their own work, and their leaders, teachers, and students will receive afresh the affection and the confidence of their constituency. Nothing better could happen for the theological colleges of any Christian land than that they should become the homes and centres where men and women are being trained in large numbers for all forms and degrees of that service to the Kingdom of Christ which, while it forsakes not the preaching of the Gospel, seeks to do it by means of education, in the class-room, no less than from the pulpit.

W. DOUGLAS MACKENZIE.

THE MINISTER AS TEACHER TRAINER

THERE is no more hopeful sign in the growing agitation for Sunday School reform that is now rising than the widespread perception of the necessity for the adequate training of the teachers. This implies no reflection on the self-sacrificing devotion of the noble army of labourers on the great field of England in the making. The more earnest their zeal is, the more reason have we for seeing that it is directed towards the largest fruitfulness. The time has gone when it could be imagined that effective work might be carried on without adequate preparation. It is true that the teacher who is engaged in business during the week cannot be expected to acquire the technical skill of the day-school master or mistress who has been specially educated for the profession. Nevertheless, he has to deal with scholars who know what good teaching is by their week-day experience, and who, reasonably or unreasonably, judge him accordingly. The amateur orchestra can never come up to the professional; but people

who are accustomed to good music will not endure it unless it is fairly skilful. Thus the raising of the professional standard necessarily affects the amateur. We cannot help the fact, however much we may complain of its injustice.

We are sometimes reminded that the Sunday School teacher has a great make-weight in his personal influence. The Sunday School is not, like the day-school, merely an educational institution. It is the Church of the young. Its chief aim is spiritual rather than intellectual. Here character counts for more than skill, and love and sympathy and a spiritual atmosphere are more valuable than exact knowledge and the art of imparting it. If this were not so the Sunday School would have failed long ago. But we must not allow such consideration—important as it is—to excuse indolence, slackness, or incompetence. The spiritual realm is so large that it includes the intellectual, claiming to enlist this in its service. If you give all to God—if you say sincerely, “Take my life”—you must mean, among other things, “Take my intellect.” At all events, in the present day, when so many earnest souls are perplexed by anxious thoughts on religion, the spiritual guide is required to help the mind as well as the hearts of those whom he is called upon to lead. The very word “teacher” is a misnomer if genuine teaching is not aimed at. The true teacher does more than teach; yet he

teaches. But the teacher must be taught. That is the point at which we have now arrived.

The Sunday School Union has long recognised the necessity for the training of teachers, and has made repeated efforts to promote this end. It carries on examinations for teachers in several subjects, both theoretical and practical, which are of such a standard that any teacher of fair intelligence and education, after due preparation, need not shrink from facing them, while they are sufficiently advanced to make the winning of a certificate of success in them a worthy object of ambition. But how small is the number of teachers who even enter for these examinations! They do not touch the vast majority.

Then the Sunday School Union institutes training classes. Central classes are held at the Old Bailey, and local classes in many places up and down the land. College professors are often engaged in conducting such classes. I may be permitted to say that my own college has instituted evening lectures for Sunday School teachers, and also a Greek Testament class in conjunction with the Manchester Sunday School Union. Other colleges are helping in various ways. Still, with all these efforts we only reach the fringe of the task. The great body of Sunday School teachers is untouched by them. To be frank, we must confess that the results of such efforts are very disappointing. We may count our attendants at

the classes and lectures by the score or even in some cases by the hundred. But the remaining thousands of teachers in the area from which we draw are unaffected. Besides, those who come are the intellectually *élite*. We have University graduates attending our Manchester classes. It is interesting to the lecturer to see such a cultivated audience. Meanwhile the multitude of the less instructed teachers are outside this select movement. Evidently we need to broaden the area of our efforts immensely if we are to influence the teaching in our schools as a whole.

The plain fact is that the bulk of the teachers cannot or will not come to training centres. The common difficulty is that they are already so much engaged in various meetings and classes at their own churches that they cannot find the evening for this extra. It is easy to reply that it is not an extra, but a matter of primary importance. The multitude of more pressing engagements is not accepted as an excuse for neglect of the weekly practice by the members of a choir, because that is set before them as of paramount importance. We can always find time for what most interests us. Still, we must face the facts; and everybody must admit that they are as I have stated. Perhaps the ultimate explanation is that there is a good deal of human nature in all of us—even in Sunday School teachers. Yet one further difficulty must be recognised. The old-established

teacher, with his settled habits, is disinclined to go to school and begin over again with new notions and methods. He is in his groove, and the longer he is there the deeper he wears it, and therefore the harder he finds it to move from it. He objects to the jolting of innovation.

Such being the state of the case, how are we to adjust ourselves to it? It is granted that the training of teachers is now more needed than ever; it is admitted that hitherto all our efforts to meet this need have met with only a minute minimum of success. Consequently it is plain to-day that we must try other methods. What are these to be?

Here I would lay down three propositions:—

1. *The training must precede the teaching.* We cannot expect to do much in the training of those who are already engaged in the work of the school. You cannot drill the soldier on the battlefield; he must learn his manœuvres as a recruit. Let our present teachers have all the help we can give them, both in the preparation of the weekly lesson and towards their own personal culture. Still, our main effort must be directed to the preparation of the new teachers of the future. We have discussed this matter long enough to have produced a whole crop of teachers by now if we had been doing the work instead of merely talking about it. What we want is the establishment of classes of young people who are in training for becoming

Sunday School teachers. Such young people should have more leisure for the study involved, since they will not be at the same time burdened with the care of classes and the preparation of lessons. The suggestion is at least logical. It is reasonable to learn how to do a thing before you begin to do it. A mistress would not engage as a cook a girl who had never been in the kitchen with the intention of sending her to a cookery class, but meanwhile entrusting her with the preparation of the family meals. Are we to be more careful about our dinners than we are about the religion of our children? It is appalling to think how people are set in care of young souls, charged with the tremendous responsibility of infusing into them the first formative ideas about God and Christ and eternal things, without any preparation for the task or any test of fitness, simply because there are classes in lack of teachers, or even in order to find work for these people, who, perhaps, as recent comers in the congregation, are to be made at home there by this means. I hope that the time is not far distant when we shall not dream of appointing Sunday School teachers in this haphazard fashion, when no new teacher will be appointed without some previous testing as to knowledge and capacity as well as Christian character.

When I speak in this way I am met by the reply that we must utilise the material we have

at hand. It is difficult to get teachers at all. If we make the standard too high we shall have fewer than ever. I do not admit that excuse; for, first, I would be content with fewer good teachers and a smaller school really taught, in preference to having a mob of children ineffectually handled, and, second—my present point—I would make it a chief work to train young people to become effective teachers.

2. *This training must be carried on in the separate schools and churches.* It cannot be done in great centres. We have long tried that method, and it has proved to be wholly inadequate. If we are to cover the ground we must have a separate teachers' training class for each school. Or, if this is impractical in the smaller schools, at most two or three in close neighbourhood might combine to form such a class. This class would always be in evidence. All the scholars would know of it. It would be the aim of earnest teachers to provide candidates for membership. Young people could be encouraged to regard it as an object of ambition to be promoted to a class which would contain the pick of the school. In such a class there would be a grounding in the first principles of our Christian faith; a study of the Bible as a whole and book by book; a consideration of the eternal questions and also of the living problems of the hour; a clear exposition of Church principles; an explanation of the principles and art of teaching.

This would be our recruiting ground, from which duly prepared teachers could be drawn as required.

3. *The minister should regard it as his high privilege to institute and conduct such a class.* Here I reach the special point to which all that I have said hitherto leads up. When we advocate the establishment of a teachers' training class we are commonly met with the difficulty that there is nobody in the Church able and willing to conduct such a class. Certainly it demands special aptitude. The leader of the class must be a trained scholar, "apt to teach." In our colleges young men pass through years of study and training preparing them for the ministry. Thus they should become themselves highly-trained teachers; thus they should be able to train and teach others.

I am aware that this remark does not apply to every minister; and while many Churches choose their pastors solely with regard to pulpit eloquence there will be many ministers whom we cannot ask to conduct teachers' training classes. But such a ground of choice is narrow and in a way selfish. The larger ministry of to-day demands more varied gifts and attainments. A duly equipped minister should have something more than the capacity of producing two attractive discourses every Sunday. Those discourses will be all the more real and biting if the preacher is in living contact with the freshest young minds in his Church, threshing out with them the difficulties

that he sees they are feeling, or leading them into the truths that he finds they are able to receive. The training class will need very thorough attention and demand much from the minister in time and thought and study. But it will be worth all the effort that he puts into it.

I do not shrink from making this demand on my brother ministers. I know that some of them are already overworked, and that any conscientious minister has really no limits to what he might undertake if only he had sufficient time and strength. Among the multitudinous and distracting claims on the ministry in the present day the strongest and most energetic must make a selection, must pass a self-denying ordinance, must be able to say "No" to many demands which in themselves are very urgent. It is a question of comparative merits and claims. The wise minister will desire to make the best use of his time. "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" Let him divide out his hours proportionately to the value of what has to be done. While he is doing this I would put in a plea for a very prominent place for the training of his own Church and School workers, even at the cost of much else that in itself seems very desirable. Outside work in the town must be cut down, for it is certainly subordinate to the paramount necessity of securing and maintaining the efficiency of the nursery of the Church.

I am inclined to think that there is an unbusinesslike lack of economy in much ministerial work. Churches expect their ministers to waste their time on many things of minor importance. While real pastoral visitation is invaluable, an immense amount of time is frittered away in the useless amenities of social life. It is nice to have the minister presiding at a literary or musical entertainment, but is such a function for a moment comparable with the serious work of grinding the swords for battle? The minister would greatly multiply his own influence by gathering about him a body of trained disciples whom he could trust to do serious work. Thus he would utilise his own stores of knowledge. Much of the acquisition of college studies is not found to have a direct bearing on the preparation for the pulpit; but a great deal of it would be most serviceable in the teachers' training class. Further, by conducting such a class the minister would keep himself in living contact with the work of the School.

I have heard ministers superciliously denouncing what they call "Sunday School theology." Whose fault is it that the theology of the Sunday School differs from that of the pulpit? This comes of the minister's aloofness from the School. He lets it go its own way without his effectual aid, and then perhaps complains that it is out of sympathy with him. He would not have had much reason for

that complaint if he had shown more practical sympathy with the School. If the teachers were the men and women whom he had trained the intimate relations of the training class and its leader would have resulted in unity of spirit in Church and School.

I have one final suggestion to make. Some men are born preachers; others are born teachers. There is room for a special order of ministers—the ministry of the teacher. Perhaps this could only be maintained in the larger Churches. It would well pay a strong Church to engage as a second minister a man of thorough University culture who might not be gifted with the sonorous eloquence that catches the ear of the multitude, but who would be “apt to teach,” and who should be devoted to the training of the Sunday School teachers, lay preachers, and other Church workers. Or a group of Churches might employ such a man between them.

WALTER F. ADENEY.

REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING THE CONFERENCE.

(The Names are arranged in Alphabetical order.)

ACKLAND, Mr. T. GANS, F.I.A., Statistical Hon. Secretary of the Sunday School Union.

ADAMS, Prof. JOHN, M.A., B.Sc., Professor of Education in the University of London, and Principal of London Day Training College.

*ADENEY, Prof. W. F., M.A., D.D., Principal of Lancashire Independent College.

The Ven. ARCHDEACON of LONDON (Rev. W. Macdonald Sinclair, D.D.)

ARCHIBALD, Mr. G. HAMILTON, Lecturer on Child Study, and Extension Lecturer of the Sunday School Union.

*BELSEY, Mr. F. F., J.P., Chairman of Council of the Sunday School Union. President of the World's First Sunday School Convention, 1889.

BONNER, Rev. CAREY, General Secretary of the Sunday School Union, London.

CLEMENTS, Mr. FRANK, Financial Hon. Secretary, the Sunday School Union.

CRADDOCK, Rev. R. E., General Sunday School Secretary of the Bible Christian Methodist Church.

CROWTHER, Mr. JAS. S., Hon. Corresponding Secretary of The Sunday School Union, and Secretary of the Training College and Examination Committee.

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- *CULLEY, Rev. ROBERT, Secretary of Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Union.
- DAVISON, Rev. W. T., M.A., D.D., Professor at Richmond College, and President Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 1901.
- DAWSON, Rev. H., M.A., Secretary of the Church of England Sunday School Institute.
- *GARVIE, Rev. A. E., M.A., D.D., Principal of New College, London.
- GIBSON, Rev. J. MONRO, M.A., D.D., LL.D., Ex-Moderator Presbyterian Church of England.
- *GREEN, Rev. S. W., M.A., Professor of New Testament Greek in Regent's Park College.
- *GROSER, Mr. W. H., B.Sc., Hon. Literary Secretary of the Sunday School Union.
- HEALING, Mr. THOS., Formerly one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools.
- *HENSHAW, Rev. S. S., Secretary of Primitive Methodist Sunday School Union.
- *JOHNSON, Rev. FRANK, Editor of "The Sunday School Chronicle and Christian Outlook."
- *KELLY, Rev. CHAS. H., President of Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 1889 and 1905.
- KINNAIRD, Rt. Hon. Lord, Vice-President of the Sunday School Union.
- KIRK, J., Secretary of Ragged School Union.
- LAWIS, Rev. J. F., Secretary of the Young People's Committee United Methodist Free Churches.
- MEYER, Rev. F. B., B.A., President Baptist Union Great Britain and Ireland.
- MITCHELL, Rev. A. F., M.A., Vicar of St. Augustine's, Sheffield.
- *PEAKE, Prof. A. S., M.A., B.D., Professor of Biblical Exegesis and Dean of the Faculty of Theology, Victoria University, Manchester.
- PLUMB, Mr. HENRY, Member of Business Committee of the Sunday School Union.

THE CHAIRMEN OF THE CONFERENCE.



REV. F. B. MEYER, B.A.
(President, Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland).



REV. J. MONRO GIBSON, M.A., D.D., LL.D.
(Ex-Moderator, Presbyterian
Church of England).



REV. C. H. KELLY
(Ex-President, Wesleyan Methodist
Conference).



THE VEN. W. M. SINCLAIR, D.D.
Archdeacon of London).

152 BIBLE TEACHING BY MODERN METHODS

- *CULLEY, REV. ROBERT, Secretary of Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Union.
- DAVISON, REV. W. T., M.A., D.D., Professor at Richmond College, and President Wesleyan Methodist Conference, 1901.
- DAWSON, REV. H., M.A., Secretary of the Church of England Sunday School Institute.
- *GARVIE, REV. A. E., M.A., D.D., Principal of New College, London.
- GIBSON, REV. J. MONRO, M.A., D.D., LL.D., Ex-Moderator Presbyterian Church of England.
- *GREEN, REV. S. W., M.A., Professor of New Testament Greek in Regent's Park College.
- *GROSER, MR. W. H., B.Sc., Hon. Literary Secretary of the Sunday School Union.
- HEALING, MR. THOS., Formerly one of H.M. Inspectors of Schools.
- *HENSHAW, REV. S. S., Secretary of Primitive Methodist Sunday School Union.
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Archdeacon of London).

- ROBERTS, Rev. J. EDWARD, M.A., B.D., Chairman of Baptist Union Young People's Committee.
- ROBERTS, Rev. RICHARD, of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Westbourne Grove.
- *ROWLAND, Rev. ALFRED, B.A., D.D., Formerly Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales.
- SINDALL, Mr. ALFRED, Conductor of the Normal Class for Teachers and Member of the Business Committee of the Sunday School Union.
- TAYLOR, Rev. ALFRED, M.A., Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society.
- *TAYLOR, Mr. FREDERIC, Secretary of the Society of Friends First-Day School Association.
- *TOWERS, Mr. EDWARD, Late Hon. Secretary of the Sunday School Union; President of the World's Third Sunday School Convention, 1898.
- *WATERS, Mr. CHAS., Founder and Hon. Secretary of the International Bible Reading Association.
- WHITE, Mr. GEORGE, M.P., President of the Sunday School Union, 1906.
- YOUNG, Rev. JOHN, Sunday School and Examination Secretary of Young People's Committee, Methodist New Connexion.

* Member of the International Lesson Committee, British Section.



THE DISCUSSIONS

FIRST SESSION

The chair at the First Session was taken by the VEN. ARCHDEACON OF LONDON, who opened the proceedings by reading from Psalm cxix., verses 97-112, and by offering prayer.

In the course of his address ARCHDEACON SINCLAIR expressed his pleasure at presiding at the opening meeting and in giving the delegates a welcome to London. Two things, he said, were noticeable in regard to the Sunday School system, one that it was so much more vigorous in the North of England than in the South, and the other, that more seemed to be thought in England of the children than of the young men and women. The latter fact had been brought before his mind at the Jerusalem Convention when, at the close of his sermon, the Americans seemed surprised that he had not said more about work among the seniors. He was strongly of opinion that the time had come when it was necessary to grapple boldly with the problem of the Senior Scholars, and to support the Institute movement which had already proved so successful. He trusted that the outcome of the consultations would be such proposals as would be to the glory of God, the good of the Church, and the benefit of the nation.

FIRST SESSION.

TOPIC: THE PRIMARY AIMS OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

Mr. W. H. GROSER. There will be little difference of opinion with regard to Dr. W. T. Davison's most able and lucid paper. I have always held that religious education has for its object the development of the religious nature, and therefore the various powers comprised in that term are those to the development of which every earnest Sunday School teacher will direct his efforts. And the object of such development is, of course, that those powers may be manifested in life and character.

Dr. MONRO GIBSON. It would be a help in the construction of future schemes of lessons if the religious aim of the school were kept prominently in view. The idea of covering the whole Bible in a few years might be dismissed and attention could be concentrated on those portions of Scripture that would help us to bring the children to Christ and to train them for His service. For general Biblical training I look to the day schools, which should provide the fuel for the fire that the Church hopes to kindle. When I was in Wales at the time of the Revival, I was much struck with the fact that some of those who had been brought to Christ from the very depths of iniquity and infamy were able at once to lead in prayer and to give excellent addresses, because they had been trained in the Bible from their youth. They were acquainted with it, they had all that furniture in their minds ready for use.

The fuel was there, and immediately the light was applied it was all ablaze.

Rev. FRANK JOHNSON. Would Dr. Davison advise that in the construction of lesson schemes the Biblical material should be so arranged as to permit of frequent evangelical appeal, or would he trust the Bible to produce its own effects?

Dr. W. T. DAVISON. I think the personal influence of the teacher must be taken into account as well as the framing of the lesson. So far as my Paper has any practical bearing it will tend to limit the area that we attempt to cover in order that the lessons might be somewhat more specifically religious than they sometimes have been.

Mr. THOS. HEALING. I do not think that the appeal for conversion gains in cogency by being overdone. All our teaching should be illustrated by a knowledge of the Bible as literature, and the teacher should have an intellectual aim in it in order to make its ethical teaching practical. If we can invest the Bible with charm and make it so interesting to them that they will study it for themselves we have done much. I think if we restrict our lessons mainly to the New Testament and to such parts of the Old as will make our Christian message clear and more cogent, that may produce the best result.

Mr. FREDERIC TAYLOR. There are many teachers who prepare a lesson as a peg on which to hang an appeal to the child, and they do not realise the importance of the educational value of the lesson itself. For small children to be appealed to every Sunday to know whether their hearts are given to the Lord Jesus is apt to be not only not useful but often very harmful.

Mr. G. H. ARCHIBALD. Our difficulty is increased by dealing with the school as a whole. What applies to the child of eight certainly does not apply to the youth of sixteen. We must specialise in these things lest one has the sixteen-year-old boy in mind, and another the eight-year-old.

Rev. A. F. MITCHELL. I doubt whether parents realise

the aim of the school as it has been defined, and many of them do not regard it as a serious teaching agency. One said to me the other day that he did not want his child to learn anything in the Sunday School : he wanted him to be taught to be good.

Mr. A. SINDALL. I strongly advocate the teaching of the life of our Lord as the great subject of the year in the Infant Classes. And I maintain that if the children come out at the end of the year with an intelligent grasp of the life and teaching of the Lord, they would go into the main schools prepared for the other lessons which perhaps do not always directly deal with that subject. I was glad to hear our chairman advise the formation of Institutes for the older scholars. Without that separation from the main body we shall never retain them in large numbers.

Dr. W. F. ADENEY. The religious aim of the Sunday School ought to govern us in the arrangement of the lessons, and we should not be afraid to neglect the parts that are least important for a practical religious end. We ought also to remember that we have not only to give such lessons as shall help religion, but we are to avoid such lessons as hinder it. It is of extreme importance that we should bear in mind the atmosphere into which our scholars go. It is all very well to have a nice little comfortable arrangement among ourselves, but we must remember they are going out into the world, into a kind of waste howling wilderness, and I doubt whether in our Sunday Schools we quite fortify them for that.

Rev. J. E. ROBERTS. Referring to the question raised by Mr. Johnson, I would say that I should not simply choose lessons that can be made to have an evangelical appeal, but should rather try and so train the child-nature, by giving them practically the whole of the Bible instruction, that the definite yielding to Jesus Christ at a particular time becomes the natural result of such Christian training. And I think if special attempts are made at certain times to gather children of certain ages together, and then quietly and simply bring home to them what yielding to Jesus

Christ means, that is a better plan than doing it Sunday by Sunday in the classes. Whilst we, however, are agreed in the main as to the primary aims of the Sunday School, I fear our congregations are not; and one of the most urgent tasks is the education of the consciences of Christian people generally in regard to these aims.

Mr. W. H. GROSER. I think the constant appeal is a very perilous thing. The attitude of the boy or girl towards the Lord Jesus Christ is very different at seven or eight from what it is four or five years later. We must not look for conversion in any proper sense of the word at a very early age. It has been happily said that the young child may be taught to look to Jesus as his Friend, but the one a little older, beginning to feel consciousness of sinfulness, to look at Him as his Saviour, and the youth or maid to take the Lord Jesus as Master and Guide.

Rev. ALFRED TAYLOR. After all, what a child learns at school is a very different thing from what we perhaps think we teach him, and a great deal is acquired by a child in spite of his teacher. If we did not believe that, very few of us would dare to teach. The Sunday School needs also to remember that it is building up Christian character, and that there is to be progressive instruction.

Rev. J. YOUNG. The Sunday School should be regarded as an evangelical agency, and whether the appeal is made week by week for personal or immediate decision for Christ or not the object should be kept ever in view; but I think the method must be left largely to the intelligence and judgment of the teacher.

Dr. W. T. DAVISON, in replying, said, I do not think the principle laid down in my little Paper is so commonplace and axiomatic as it may seem. I believe if it were carried out, if we all saw all that it means and implies, I believe its adoption would make a wonderful difference in solving for us some of our most serious problems.



MR. W. H. GROSER, B.SC.
(Senior Hon. Sec., Sunday School Union).



REV. R. F. HORTON, M.A., D.D.
(Hampstead, London).
Photo by Ernest Miles



REV. A. E. GARVIE, M.A., D.D.
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II. MODERN BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND ITS BEARING UPON
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING.

Mr. G. H. ARCHIBALD. I hardly see how these subjects affect children. A child's life is over when it reaches the age of twelve or fourteen, and information of this kind they rarely ask for until the adolescent period. It seems to me we must give children the Bible exactly as it is. The Old Testament stories are most beautiful for the little child. Intellectual doubt is not rampant with young children, therefore this discussion affects adults and young men and women. Give the children the Bible, not your ideas of the Bible, and trust it to do its own work.

F. TAYLOR. It seems to me we have two distinct things before us. One is how far we ought to bring the results of criticism to children, and the other is how far teachers ought to be made acquainted with them.

Rev. J. YOUNG. I think no teacher should touch the subject who is not perfectly familiar with it and able to handle it intelligently and reverently.

Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS. Mr. Archibald is right in my judgment, so far as young children are concerned, for any view of inspiration is secondary to what the Bible is in itself. I have a book of Scripture stories, and my little girl has named it her "Jesus Christ Book." That seems to me to express pretty accurately the right view of the Bible. It is just the "Jesus Christ Book," and instead of presupposing any particular theory of inspiration as our justification for our faith in the authority of the Scriptures, we should rather regard it as the repertory of a complete knowledge of Jesus Christ. This view is justified because it has so worked out in human experience and in our own experience, and the authority of our own experience is a surer guarantee of the truth of the Scriptures than any presumptive view of inspiration can ever be. I believe, therefore, that we should habitually cause ourselves and others to regard the Bible from this particular angle, and if we did that

we should get away from the difficulties which Biblical criticism has raised.

Dr. MONRO GIBSON. It occurs to me that if we keep the primary aim of the school well in view we shall get help in regard to this subject. We ought never to bring forward the critical theories until the necessity arises. The question of origins is rather academic than practical. Consider a moment whether you would ever get a proper idea of a statue by a visit to the marble quarries of Carrara, whether one look at the Apollo Belvidere would not give you a far better idea of a statue than a whole life-time spent in the quarries of Carrara.

Rev. FRANK JOHNSON. May I venture to suggest a practical difficulty? The International Lessons for 1907 begin with Genesis; and we are already face to face with the critical and expository aids upon those chapters. Would you counsel the entire exclusion of any references to critical results? Would a normal class of children under twelve feel any difficulties in these narratives? And since these lessons will also be used in many Senior Classes, how far should a teacher deal with the difficulties that arise? Is it possible with a class of young men to avoid the problems that are so obvious? If not, what position do you counsel teachers to take?

Mr. G. H. ARCHIBALD. Was there ever a word spoken more strongly in favour of a graded course of lessons than that which we have just heard? It seems to me that the only way out of the difficulty, which the Editor of the *Sunday School Chronicle* so keenly feels, is a graded course of lessons, and I hope the Conference is going to take a forward step in that matter.

Dr. MONRO GIBSON. Mr. Archibald does not mean that these lessons should be left out for the young people?

Mr. ARCHIBALD. Oh no! The difficulty is the treatment of them in a general way.

Mr. F. F. BELSEY. I think it is only fair to say that these lessons are supposed to be taken by the intermediate school.

We have a two-years' course of simple Bible stories for the beginners.

Mr. GEORGE WHITE, M.P. What has developed of late years under the title of Higher Criticism I think is best avoided almost altogether by Sunday School teachers. The doubts and difficulties that come into the minds of the seniors are not the difficulties that Biblical scholars feel but questions they hear in their own homes raised by infidel parents or papers. It is with these common doubts that teachers want to be able to cope in an ordinary way. That they can only do by getting rational views of the inspiration of the Bible and sound general principles which will help them in meeting those individual doubts and difficulties. Recently one of my teachers came to me and said he had two youths in his class and he must have them removed, for they were constantly suggesting all sorts of difficulties about the narrative as it was read, and that led to a discussion, and he could not successfully teach the class at all. I said, "Are these genuine doubts, or are they raised simply for the purpose of putting you into a fog and raising a discussion in the class?" He thought they were for that purpose. I said, "I will take the class myself next Sunday afternoon and see whether these doubts are genuine or otherwise." I soon discovered they were absolutely genuine doubts, put forward with a desire to get them removed, and in one case at least I happened to know they were suggested by the father himself, who was a man who talked on the Market-place, constantly attacking the Bible and revealed religion. I am bound to say the afternoon to me was a very interesting one and far from being a trouble to me. But I ultimately thought it was better to remove these two youths, because I was quite sure the teacher was not able to meet the difficulty, and I did so, of course without letting it be known why I did it. But this was a case in which he simply wanted, not any very great knowledge of theology or science generally, but some sensible basis upon which he could say what were the real objects of the Bible.

Rev. FRANK JOHNSON. The whole matter is a question of

fact and truth. Are there any results of criticism absolutely indisputable? If so, that truth must be received and taught, however it conflicts with tradition.

Archdeacon SINCLAIR. Prof. Orr's paper is of an eminently reassuring character all through, and if the conclusions of this paper are accepted, it will be impossible, I think, to accept any of the dicta of the higher critics at present with regard to the Pentateuch as absolutely proved.

Professor A. S. PEAKE. Professor Orr's paper shows us the difficulties of the situation; but I cannot accept the main results at which he arrives both in the paper and in his book, "The Problem of the Old Testament." I have read that book carefully, with great admiration for many of the qualities displayed, but with complete disagreement as to Dr. Orr's chief conclusions. There are a very large number of people who will certainly say that Dr. Orr's book has knocked the bottom out of the critical position. In my judgment it has done nothing of the kind. Mr. Johnson has put the point in a very clear and definite way. Have we any critical results on which we can carry every one with us? I am afraid we have not very many. It is quite true, of course, that Dr. Orr's position is by no means so conservative as people would imagine. There is a great deal of tacit concession and even explicit concession at various points in the book. But it is not the case that we have, even with Dr. Orr's concessions, anything like a situation on which a pronouncement could go forth from a Conference of this kind. Of course I think that certain principles might be clearly kept in view. We might emphasise very strongly what Dr. Davison emphasises, that criticism is to be kept in subordination to the general aim of teaching the Bible. My main claim on the intellectual side is that the Bible as it is should be taught and stored in the hearts of our young people. I have enormous faith in the power of the Bible itself to effect miracles of grace in God's hands. But when we come to the question as to origins, I believe, with Dr. Gibson, that that is a very subordinate thing. But we ought so to formulate our principles that our children as they grow older and come face to face

with these will feel that this does not touch the vital element in their Christian faith. I remain now, if a personal confession may be pardoned, as one who must be classed in many respects as an advanced Old Testament critic, but I remain now as firm in my conviction of evangelical truth as I was before I ever heard of criticism at all—not only as firm, but I think, if I may say so, firmer and even more intelligent in my conviction than I was before. I am quite sure, however, that the difficulty does not lie with the Old Testament in the immediate future, it lies with the New Testament, where I for my own part adopt what is largely a conservative position, because I consider that the problems of the two literatures are entirely different. Nothing that I have ever read or written with reference to criticism in any way goes against my own conviction of the unspeakable religious value of both the Old and New Testament and my belief that the more the knowledge of both can be acquired, the greater will be the value for the children in our Sunday Schools.

LORD KINNAIRD. I was thinking of asking the question whether this Conference should issue a sort of manifesto on the subjects discussed, but I gather from the differences of opinion expressed that no agreement would be reached on this question at any rate. I take it that many of us would be sorry that anything should go out to the effect that we have largely changed our opinion in the last twenty or thirty years, and that the position taken by the majority of those who write on these matters is fundamentally different from what it was twenty years ago.

Archdeacon SINCLAIR. There is no idea on the part of those who brought us together that we should pass a resolution on this subject. It was more that we should talk these things over.

SECOND SESSION

The chair at the Second Session was occupied by the Rev. J. MONRO GIBSON, D.D., LL.D., who, after opening the Session with prayer, said it was one of the most hopeful signs of the times that so much attention was now paid to the best way of studying and teaching the Bible ; and the Sunday School Union was once again showing its alertness and wide-awakeness, in giving an opportunity for focussing as much as possible the thoughts of the time.

Among the changes that had taken place in regard to the Bible and its study few were more notable than the change from the microscopic to the telescopic method, or from the careful dealing with "tit bits" to the study of wholes : whole books, whole periods, a whole Bible with its grand and gradual unfolding of Divine revelation. They would recall Goethe's maxim :—

"Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren,
Resolut zu leben ;"

and Matthew Arnold used to urge them to "see life steadily, and see it whole." This could be applied with great advantage both to the separate books, and to the Book of books.

Thomas Boston once devoted nearly six months' discourses to eight verses of the Book of Revelation, and one of his (Dr. Gibson's) fellow-students began his labours by preaching a winter's series of discourses on a text of five words : "He drove out the man !" That detailed method was the fashion fifty years ago, but to-day we were urged to lift up our eyes to the hills, and to take in the great things of revelation, the mountains of truth that brought peace to the people. Such a method brought immense gains.

"This is only one thing briefly indicated ; but it is of importance, and I feel sure that such a Conference as we are enjoying these two days through the hospitality of the Sunday School Union will tend to further the development of Sunday School instruction in this and other helpful directions."

SECOND SESSION.

TOPIC : "THE METHOD OF TEACHING THE BIBLE."

(a) THE SCIENTIFIC V. THE HAPHAZARD.

(b) THE USE OF THE BIBLE FOR CHRISTIAN EDIFICATION.

Mr. ARCHIBALD. How would you apply what you have said to an eight-year-old class ?

Rev. A. F. MITCHELL. My point is whatever we teach the little children should lead up in the Old Testament to the prophetic part, and agree with what we teach them when they are older. It was suggested this morning that they should take the Book of Genesis and make what they can of it. I think they ought to be told from the very first that the world was not created in six days.

Mr. ARCHIBALD. You mean we ought to say, "Now this is not true" ?

Rev. A. F. MITCHELL. I should not teach it them at all. I think all teaching should be concentrated on that part of Scripture about which there is no question.

Rev. F. TAYLOR. Would you restrict the child to the parts that centre round the prophetic books ?

Rev. A. F. MITCHELL. I would give them some knowledge of the previous history in such stories as David and Solomon and so on. You remember we have the New Testament.

Mr. ARCHIBALD. But we could not give the New Testament as a whole to a little child at first. If we present to the child the thought that Jesus was a mighty Son of God, you are just

pushing away the child from Him. It seems to me that Jesus Christ came as a little child so that the child might hear of Him rather as a little child than the mighty Son of God. You must begin at the child's point of contact.

Rev. A. F. MITCHELL. I had the upper classes of the school chiefly in mind in writing the Paper.

Mr. G. H. ARCHIBALD. More than half the scholars are under twelve years of age.

Rev. FRANK JOHNSON. There are two ideals in conflict. The child-study expert desires to arrange the Bible-facts in an order suitable to the development of the child's mind ; whereas the scholar desires to teach the Bible in the order of its historic evolution.

Mr. G. H. ARCHIBALD. That is the vital point before the Conference. The child is often forgotten. I believe the right way is to take a child through the Bible and tell him the stories just as you would tell any other stories until he begins asking questions. The Bible cannot lead any one wrong.

Mr. THOMAS HEALING. I think the preaching of to-day differs from the preaching we heard in our boyhood, not so much by what it sets forth as by what it leaves out. That is the result of progress acting on the collective intelligence of the congregation and the culture of the preacher. With regard to putting those things before young children, I have great respect for what has been advanced by Mr. Mitchell, because my own studies have been very much in that direction for some years, but I do not think I should have studied that way when I was a youngster. As a child I enjoyed very much the stories of Genesis. The stories of Genesis, Joshua, and Judges give the teacher the opportunity of teaching the ethics and morality of the Bible and the character of God. They are just in the form that the child can lay hold of.

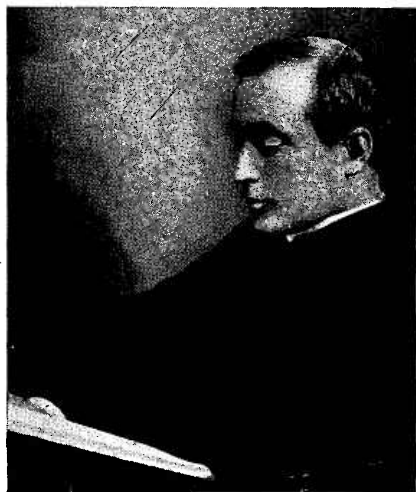
Dr. W. T. DAVISON. What Mr. Mitchell has described in his Paper ought to be in the mind of every well-educated teacher when he sets to work. But those who know Sunday School teachers know that they will have to be trained for nearly a generation before they reach that point. Supposing



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(Principal, Lancashire Independent
College).



REV. W. T. DAVISON, M.A., D.D.
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REV. A. F. MITCHELL, M.A.
(Vicar of St. Augustine's, Sheffield).



REV. R. A. FALCONER, D.D., D.LITT.
(Principal, Presbyterian College, Halifax,
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Mr. THOMAS HEALING. I think the preaching of to-day differs from the preaching we heard in our boyhood, not so much by what it sets forth as by what it leaves out. That is the result of progress acting on the collective intelligence of the congregation and the culture of the preacher. With regard to putting those things before young children, I have great respect for what has been advanced by Mr. Mitchell, because my own studies have been very much in that direction for some years, but I do not think I should have studied that way when I was a youngster. As a child I enjoyed very much the stories of Genesis. The stories of Genesis, Joshua, and Judges give the teacher the opportunity of teaching the ethics and morality of the Bible and the character of God. They are just in the form that the child can lay hold of.

Dr. W. T. DAVISON. What Mr. Mitchell has described in his Paper ought to be in the mind of every well-educated teacher when he sets to work. But those who know Sunday School teachers know that they will have to be trained for nearly a generation before they reach that point. Supposing



REV. W. F. ADENEY, M.A., D.D.
(Principal, Lancashire Independent
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REV. A. F. MITCHELL, M.A.
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REV. R. A. FALCONER, D.D., D.LITT.
(Principal, Presbyterian College, Halifax,
Nova Scotia).



PROF. A. S. PEAKE, M.A., B.D.
(Victoria University, Manchester).

they reached it, how would it affect the actual teaching not only of the little children, but of the older scholars? Are we to begin by teaching them duty? Are we to cut out the narrative portions because they cannot pass muster with the scientific historian of to-day? I do not think the reader of the Paper meant that. From the practical point of view many would say, "What are we to do, not only with the story of Genesis, but with the stories of Samuel and Kings? Are we, because we have learnt what we think to be a fairly scientific view of the Old Testament, are we to throw these narratives into the background as comparatively unimportant for the purposes of actual teaching?" It seems to me to be a very sweeping statement to say that because the latter portion of the Old Testament is the most important, therefore other parts which are less important should be omitted altogether.

REV. A. F. MITCHELL. I should begin with the Prophet Elijah, and should certainly leave out the earlier parts of Genesis.

DR. A. E. GARVIE. We are a long way from getting Mr. Mitchell's admirably conceived scheme directly into the Sunday Schools. It is first of all necessary to get a scheme like that into the minds of those who are responsible for setting the International Lessons, and then into the minds of the teachers of the senior classes. But we ought not to attempt to teach the Bible as a whole to the younger children. I do not share Mr. Archibald's confidence in the wisdom of teaching Genesis just as it is. I believe we are being driven to a system of graded lessons. At first children ought to be taught stories with an effort to leave the correct impression of human duty and Divine grace upon their minds; historical accuracy is for instruction later. Experts in child-study may tell us how to teach, but it is for Biblical scholars to tell us what is to be taught.

DR. MONRO GIBSON. I should deplore exceedingly leaving out the Book of Genesis with its marvellous stories. In dealing with these questions my own effort is not to decide whether they are historical or not. A great deal of the

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teaching of these stories is lost because people attach so much importance to the question whether they are historical. Their real value lies in the spiritual truths taught.

Rev. R. ROBERTS. It is more a question of making teachers familiar with these facts than imparting them to the scholars.

Professor S. W. GREEN. Mr. Roberts has gone to the very heart of the matter. We have to reckon not only with the ignorance of the teachers, but with the fact that there are two ways of looking at the Bible. Dr. Garvie has pointed to the devotional use of the Bible. Its use for spiritual needs is entirely compatible with what may be termed the scientific view, and if we devote ourselves to getting that view instilled into the teachers we shall be doing something not only to dispel ignorance but to make many aware that such a view of Scripture is entirely consistent with the most devoted love to Christ.

TOPIC : "TEACHER TRAINING."

THE ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.

Mr. A. SINDALL. The real difficulty is to get those who most need training to attend a class or go through a course of study. Sometimes, too, superintendents are unwilling to part with their teachers for a short time. Another difficulty is that the teachers themselves do not always feel the need for training.

Mr. EDWARD TOWERS. Superintendents all over the kingdom are compelled to do the best with such teachers as they can get rather than wait for the perfect teacher to come along. If it is to go forth from this Conference that superintendents are to discard the less capable teachers, then they would simply rebel. The Church itself has not yet adequately realised the importance of children, and the consequence is they have not sent their best men and women into the Sunday School.

Dr. ALFRED ROWLAND. To a large extent we have poor material amongst the teachers, and the question is how best

to equip those teachers. It is of no use to expect teachers living in the suburbs to attend classes at the Old Bailey. They seldom have time, and therefore some arrangement ought to be made for training them in their own Churches. I have long been of opinion that the week-evening service might be utilised as a sort of preparation class for Sunday School teachers.

Rev. J. E. ROBERTS. I do not think that in the future there will be any great difficulty in getting a fairly good supply of teachers, but what we have to do is to awaken the consciences not merely of the teachers but of the Church itself.

Professor JOHN ADAMS, in replying, said he would rather overwork one good teacher than have a number of bad ones ; in fact, he would rather have a child not taught than that he should be taught badly.

THIRD SESSION

Chairman : The Rev. F. B. MEYER, B.A.

After prayer, Mr. MEYER said he had for several years used the International Lesson with his teachers, and had constantly felt that it was capable of improvement. It covered too large an extent of territory, and often most interesting and salutary portions of the Bible were omitted. The impression left on the mind was very similar to that of a general view from a railway train travelling quickly through a landscape and leaving in many cases rather an indistinct and blurred view of the whole. He felt that a more minute and careful study would leave a more definite impression.

At the same time they wanted a system as simple as possible. He believed there would be a strong argument against the universal acceptance of different subjects for the different parts of the school. They ought to enlist the very best minds in the Church for the training of the children, and in his judgment no Reform was more necessary than to induce Sunday Schools to seek for better trained teachers.

THIRD SESSION.

TOPIC : "THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON SCHEME."

ITS DEFECTS AND SUGGESTED REMEDIES.

Dr. W. F. ADENEY. It seems to me that it is certainly time that the English Committee took a more definite stand in regard to what English Sunday Schools need. I understand that virtually the lessons are dictated by the American Committee, who in their turn are dictated to by the publishers. The first thing to do is to see how the yoke of the American publishers of the International System can be broken, and I believe our American Sunday School friends will welcome any co-operation towards that end. If co-operation is not practicable then we shall have seriously to consider whether the beautiful International idea is so supremely important that the efficiency of the Sunday Schools is to be sacrificed to it.

All three Papers seem to me, if not altogether against our present system, at all events in favour of looking for something wiser and better. I do not agree with Mr. Groser that the lessons should be pitched to the level of the most backward scholar.

There are three possible ways in which we can deal with the Bible as the groundwork of teaching. The first is to begin with the child and consider its requirements rather than the manipulation of the Book. The second is distinctly Biblical—namely, to trace out the course of Divine revelation in the history of Israel and in the New Testament ; and the third is to deal with the subject of the great Christian doctrines. The two latter can be combined. Why should

we not have a scheme which gives a survey of the grand development of the religion of Israel up to Christianity, and then a series of lessons on Messianic prophecy and Christ, on Sacrifice and Redemption, and on the Christian conception of life? That would work in with the notion of distinctive kinds of teaching for distinctive ages.

Dr. A. E. GARVIE. It is very desirable that we should work with our American brethren, but we are not to be precluded from considering improvements on the ground that the Americans might not entertain them. The English Committee ought to formulate the best scheme they can and then press it on the Americans for their acceptance.

If the International Scheme is not improved we shall find that the great Denominations will establish schemes of their own and the International Scheme will in time be left stranded.

In dealing with the Infant Classes, we ought to recognise that age does not actually indicate capacity, and we ought not to be guided by the hard and fast rule of an age limit; but when scholars pass from the Infant Department of the day school to a higher department, they ought also to pass from the Infant Department of the Sunday School. The same principle should be observed in the Upper Classes. When a boy leaves school and goes to work he is not so ready to continue in the lower section of the Sunday School. The age at which a certain measure of independence is reached ought to be recognised as the time for the transition from one department to another.

Mr. EDWARD TOWERS. I stand here as a defender of the International Lesson System. It has its defects and it has received all kinds of criticism, but at the same time we have not yet hit upon anything really able to take its place. Prof. Peake tells us there is no continuity; but I contend there is. The main idea of the majority of the teachers is to make a religious impression on the minds and hearts of their scholars—not to teach Bible history. We must consider the material they are working with. We must make the lessons suitable to the character of

those who are being taught. The International Scheme is capable of improvement ; we ought to try to mend not end it.

Rev. J. E. ROBERTS. I am quite convinced that there must be some very considerable modification of the International Lessons if they are to be retained in English Sunday Schools. Whilst all are agreed on doing everything in their power to preserve the International Lessons, it would not be fair to our work to sacrifice the efficiency of our schools in order to perpetuate the sentiment of International partnership. I do not think any one of the four principles mentioned in Mr. Johnson's Paper as laid down by the International Convention, as a basis of the lessons, would be accepted by any present.

Rev. FRANK JOHNSON. Is the following of the historical order of revelation the only way of teaching religion, or is it but one way, and is that way suitable for all children ? It is a mere superstition to think that the Sunday School Union is bound hand and foot to the International Lesson Scheme. They are pledged to nothing but truth and the efficiency of the Sunday Schools. There is no doubt that the education of the people, both in America and in this country, has outgrown the ideal which was acceptable when the International System was started. As one outcome of the Conference I should like to see the English section of the Committee enlarged so as to become thoroughly representative of the whole country.

Mr. F. F. BELSEY. The Denver Convention, which Mr. Johnson and I attended, accepted the suggestion of the British section that the International Lesson System should apply only to the main body of the scholars and not to the Beginners and the Advanced Classes.

Mr. G. H. ARCHIBALD. Infant teachers are crying out for a Special Course for the very little people, and I have been recommending teachers of the four- and five-year-olds to follow a course which has been arranged by Professor George W. Pease. It consists of a two years' Nature Course and it contains some Bible stories. The child lives

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more closely to God through nature than at any other time of its existence. The Course for beginners ought to be drawn up by specialists, and I believe the Kindergarteners could give the best help. The lessons ought to be so plain and the stories so simple that there should be no need to point the moral. Children are not getting the Bible; they are getting teachers' imperfect ideas of the Bible. The average young Sunday School teacher is under the impression that he has to preach to the children.

Professor A. S. PEAKE, in replying, said: In the course of my work I come into contact with men fresh from the Sunday School, and I know what kind of Bible knowledge they come with. I have in mind the case of a man who had graduated and held two degrees, and was going on for another, who had been brought up in Sunday Schools under the International Lesson System, yet I found that a large proportion of the simplest facts of Old Testament history, to say nothing of the Prophets, were largely unknown to him. What was the cause underlying that result? I have come to the conclusion that the system does not work in the way in which one expected it to work in the imparting even of elementary Biblical knowledge in a large number of cases. I have tested the International Scheme over a considerable area, and I frequently found that when the subject was difficult the lessons were too long; and on the other hand when it was quite simple and easy the lessons were extremely short. The narratives also are sometimes not consecutive. Personally, I think more time ought to be devoted to reading the Bible and less time given to exposition. The main point is that the lesson should be left in the minds of the children. Teachers ought to trust the Bible to make its own impression rather than spend so much time trying to point the lesson. I believe that a consecutive course of study carried on over a certain area without the painful gaps that at present exist would be much more beneficial, and would result in a greater cumulative force of moral power. The quality

of the religious life in the Churches depends very largely upon the kind of religious instruction that has been given, and the religious instruction depends largely upon the history underlying it. With regard to the Golden Texts, I think that the memory ought to be stored with those passages of Scripture which are of the greatest intrinsic importance.

Mr. W. H. GROSER also thanked the members of the Conference for the extent to which they had answered some of the queries in his Paper. He noted with the greatest delight and satisfaction that they were all approaching something like a consensus of opinion in the direction of graded lessons. His only fear was that the standpoint from which the bulk of their American friends viewed the whole question was in some degree incompatible with the views which had been expressed by the Conference.

FOURTH SESSION

Chairman : Rev. C. H. KELLY, Ex-President of the Wesleyan Conference.

Prayer having been offered, Mr. KELLY, in opening the Session, said that it was very pleasant to feel that nowadays there was so much more distinct recognition of the Sunday School on the part of the Church. It was rather wonderful considering the position of children in the New Testament and the great work of our Saviour, that for so many centuries very little was done for the children. Unquestionably in the past there had not been in the Church and on the part of many ministers that recognition of the importance of the work there ought to have been ; but a change had come over the Church, and to-day some of the best minds were at work endeavouring to strengthen the great Institution to which they were all so much attached, and for that he thought they ought to feel abundantly thankful.

FOURTH SESSION.

TOPIC: "THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES AND THE SUNDAY SCHOOL."

Mr. F. F. BELSEY. Some little time ago the Sunday School Union approached the various Committees of the Denominational Colleges with a suggestion that there should be provided in the College curriculum some special training for ministers in Sunday School methods of work, and in a great many instances they received the reply that the curriculum was at present so overlāden that it would be utterly impossible to introduce any other subject, although they were good enough here and there to admit its importance. Professor Adeney's arguments ought to influence the College Committees to give greater recognition to Sunday School work, and some special preparation to the future pastors of Churches in order to prepare them for the duties of teacher-training.

Mr. J. CROWTHER (Hon. Sec. Sunday School Union). I personally interviewed the Principal of one College, but although he was quite in sympathy with the work, he said the College courses were already mapped out, and they had not the opportunity of making what some felt to be a needful innovation. We have not only sought the help of the Professors, but we have also sought the help of some of the Committees, and Sir Albert Spicer, who has given valuable help, was confronted with the self-same difficulty, namely, that the Colleges were already overloaded with work. They saw the need; but they could not find the time to meet it as fully as was desired.

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Dr. W. T. DAVISON. I am quite sure that the answers our friends have received from certain Colleges would be given by all who undertake the practical work of training young ministers, and it would not imply the slightest lack of sympathy or any failure to realise the importance of the subject. Colleges have not only a crowded curriculum, but they have outside classes which the students are required to attend. Would it not be well to look at the actual conditions of the case, and not at what might be ideally expected? It seems to me that a Professor should be always training his men to teach, and not that he should have a special hour for considering the art and principles of teaching. The work should really be interwoven with all the ordinary teaching of the College. I agree with Professor Adeney when he says that every Minister should be the trainer of his own Sunday School teachers.

Mr. CHARLES WATERS. This discussion shows there are other institutions beside the Sunday School that need attention. I do not think that the apologies that are made for the omission of this important work from the Colleges are quite sufficient. The training of teachers ought to be one of the chief things to be considered in the education of ministers.

Mr. THOMAS HEALING. Without increasing the College staff or overloading the curriculum, let the Professor of Psychology lecture on Child Nature, and the Professor of Pastoral Theology on Sunday School Method and Organisation. The Library should contain a selection of the best books on these subjects, and the lives of great educators.

Dr. A. E. GARVIE. I am inclined to take a more hopeful view than Dr. Davison has done. I do not think the change can be made as quickly or as thoroughly as might be desired, for the Colleges are limited very largely by the opinion and the demand of the Churches. When the Churches realise the importance of the training of teachers the Colleges will be able to take action with confidence, knowing that the Churches will support them. At the present time there is a movement among the Colleges to come into closer touch

with the Universities, and this imposes certain burdens upon the Colleges which they must be prepared to meet. But it is quite possible that the Colleges and Churches will yet be compelled to face the question of how far these academic distinctions interfere with the practical training that they desired to give their students.

Rev. CHARLES KELLY. A large amount of good will follow this discussion, because, although we may not be able to get special lecturers appointed in the Colleges, yet the Professors will see how they may assist Sunday School work. There is a great difficulty in the way of helping those teachers who most need help. Those who avail themselves of the classes are mostly those who are already apt at teaching, and I agree with Professor Adeney that the only way to deal with the difficulty is by preparing young people for teaching before they are accepted as teachers.

Rev. R. ROBERTS. The question of teacher-training in Churches is a pressing problem. It is an attractive idea to have two orders of Christian ministers—the preacher and the teacher. But we have to face the fact that we are not likely to see that state of things this side of fifty years, and that the same man will have to do the two things. It is therefore apparent that there must be somewhere in the training of ministers that particular element which will enable them to do what most of us are coming to feel is the most important part of our work, training the teachers of the young. I am convinced that no Conference will get the Colleges to undertake that work. The only power that will get the Colleges to undertake it is the Churches. The real crux of the position is the relation of the Churches to the Sunday Schools, and we shall have to awaken the consciences of the Churches to the importance of Sunday School work, and then the Colleges will give what the Churches demand.

Professor A. S. PEAKE. I feel that the work of the Sunday School is the most important which the minister has to do, and whatever else suffers that ought not to suffer. There-

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fore the College curriculum ought to be shaped in such a way as to provide some training, so that a minister when he leaves will not be quite helpless. The curriculum is undeniably already seriously crowded, and especially is it crowded in consequence of the Colleges' closer relations with the Universities. Of course when students take the Arts course they have a certain amount of training in psychology, but the fact that they have a training in psychology does not necessarily mean they have a training in child psychology or in the art of teaching. It means that they get a foundation on which it is easy to build rapidly an elementary knowledge of child-psychology and teacher-training. I feel strongly that the claim of the Sunday School is so paramount that other things will have to give way to it.

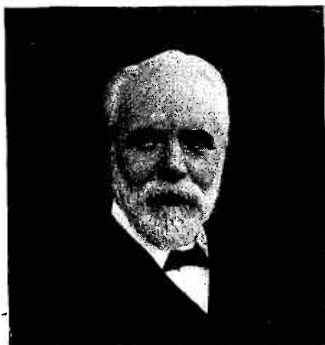
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Mr. EDWARD TOWERS. If students went out into the ministry thoroughly equipped to take their position at the head of the schools and could show the teachers how to teach, their power in the Church would be multiplied enormously.

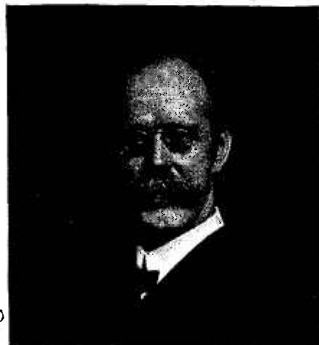
Mr. ALFRED SINDALL. I am glad to have heard the remarks of Professor Adeney, because he said certain things which no layman would have dared to say. It is not only the ministers who need to be lectured, but in many cases the Churches. Frequently the only knowledge the Church has of the Sunday School is on the occasion of the anniversary, when the congregation finds all the threepenny pieces they have to support the school. The teachers not only do the work, but in most instances they pay for it as well. It seems to me that many young people in the Senior Classes may very



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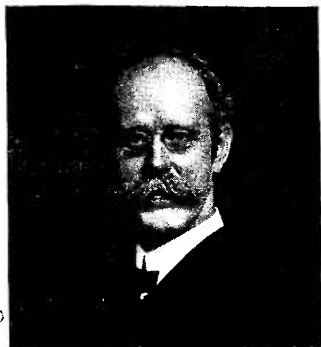
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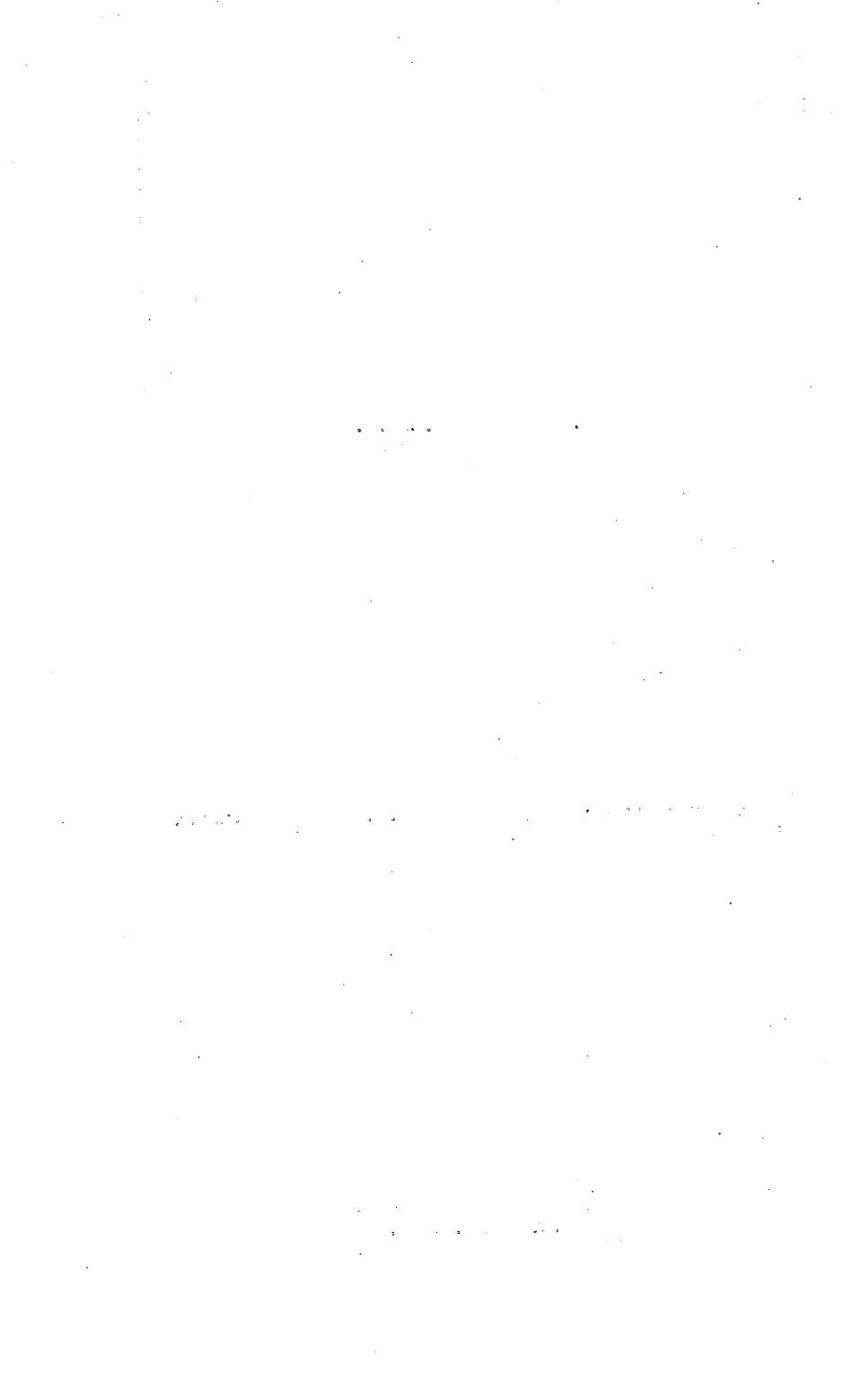
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well be prepared for teaching, by other teachers taking them into their classes and showing them how the work should be done. Until there is more recognition of the responsibility of the teacher's office it will not be appreciated at its true worth. The appointment of the teacher should be by the vote of the Church as well as by that of their fellow teachers. In conclusion, Mr. Sindall expressed his deep gratitude to the Council of the Sunday School Union for holding the Conference, and his feeling of joy at the evident sympathy that had been expressed by everybody in the work of the Sunday School.

The following resolutions were then adopted :—

I. GRADING IN THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

1. That this Conference, during full discussion of various subjects bearing upon the Religious Education of Young People, has again and again been forced to the conclusion which it now places on record, that, for the efficient instruction and training of young people it is absolutely necessary that the PRINCIPLE of GRADING should have fuller recognition in the Sunday School than is at present accorded to it.

2. The Conference urges upon Sunday School leaders that the general grading of THE SCHOLARS should, wherever possible, follow, at any rate, the plan of separate Departments :—

- (a) Infants or Primary School (up to 8 years of age) ;
- (b) The Middle School (from 8 to 15 years of age), divided either into Lower Middle and Upper Middle, or Junior and Intermediate, whichever terms are preferred ; and
- (c) The Senior Department or Institute (from 15 years of age upwards).

3. Further, this Conference believes that the TEACHING, both in its subject-matter and method, should itself be graded, so as to be adapted to the needs of the various Departments of the School.

Ages are simply named by way of general guidance,

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the Conference fully realising that the age classification must frequently be modified when the *capacities* of the scholars are considered.

II. THE PERSONNEL OF THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON COMMITTEE, BRITISH SECTION.

This Conference respectfully suggests to the Council of the Sunday School Union, that it would be advisable to enlarge the British Section of the Lesson Committee, to make it as widely representative of the British Churches as possible.

III. THE INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

The Conference, further, urges upon the Council of the Sunday School Union, that the time has now come to consider the necessity of re-modelling the International Lesson system, to bring it more into line with the needs of the modern Sunday School; and asks that the Council shall take such steps as may be necessary to ensure the discussion of this matter by the International Lesson Committee.

IV. THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES AND THE MINISTER AS A TEACHER-TRAINER.

This Conference recommends that the Clergyman or Minister should, where possible, conduct, or arrange to have conducted by some competent person, a Class or Classes for Teacher-training in connection with his own Church and School.

Further, in order to fit students for the Ministry to undertake this important work the Conference most respectfully invites the sympathetic co-operation of Tutors and Committees of Theological Colleges.

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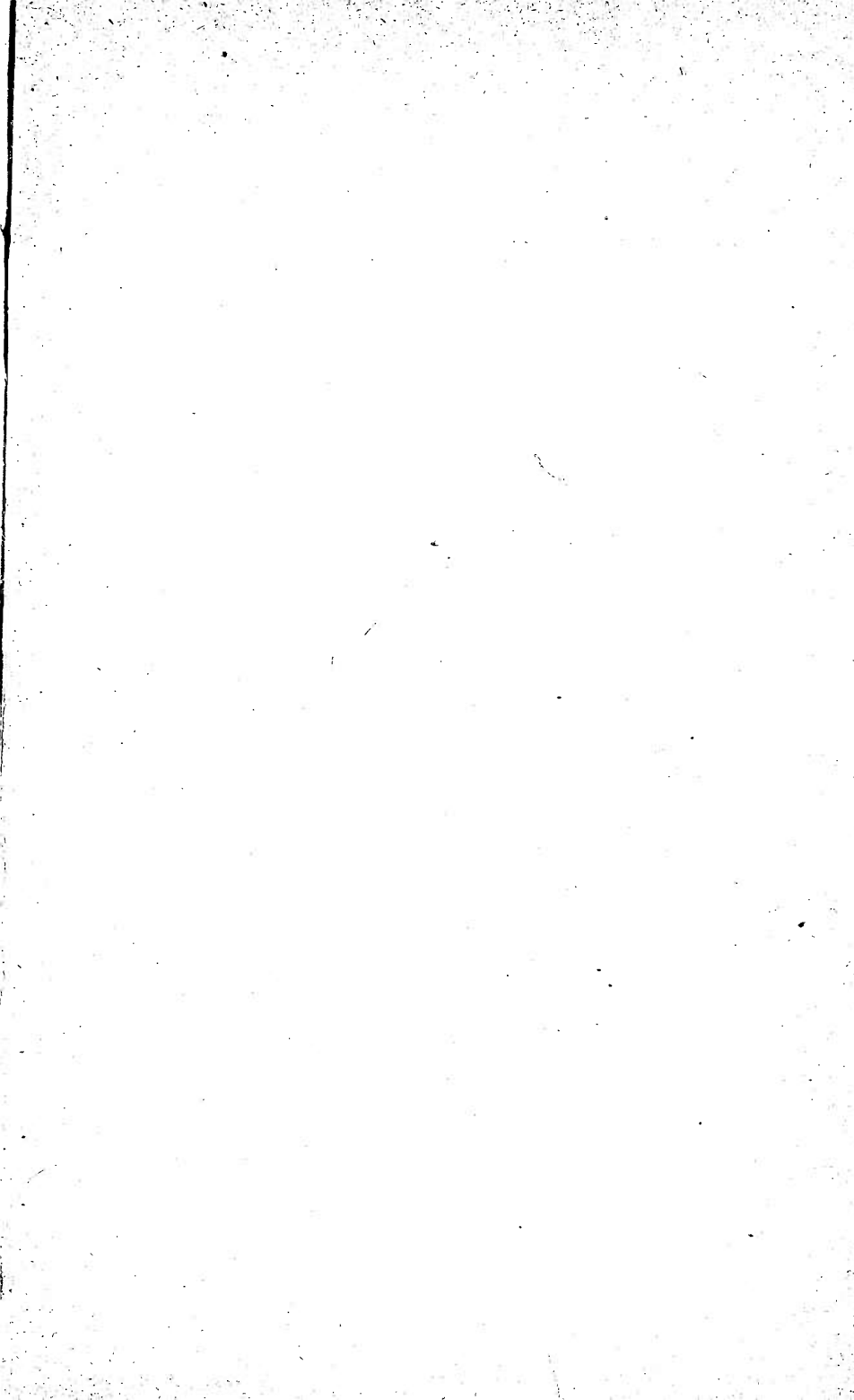
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